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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

At the Second International Conference-Seminar held in Madras during January 1968, the late Chief Minister Dr. C. N. Annadurai stated categorically in the course of his address that,

> 'If you want to constitute a body of scholars and research workers, I am the first man to welcome that idea . . . you base it on the lines of the French Academy and establish it in Tamil-land and see to it that it does not become too officialised and see to it also that it does not get into the hands of this group or that group, then you would be setting a very fertile body which will grow into the Indian Academy or Tamil Academy based on lines identical or similar to the French Academy'.

The then Minister for Education, Hon'ble *Nāvalar* V. R. Nedunchezhian echoed the same sentiments. In implementing this nobly-cherished desire of *Aṟiñar* Annadurai, the Chief Minister, Hon'ble Dr. *Kalaiñar* M. Karunanidhi and his cabinet colleagues have established the International Institute of Tamil Studies in Madras.

The Journal of Tamil Studies is coming out as the publication of the Institute and this is the first number.

In this issue the articles by Dr. Albert Franklin and Dr. Brenda E. F. Beck are being published in the same system of transcription followed by them, while all other articles are in the system of transcription adopted by the Tamil Lexicon. The Editors request the scholars in Tamilology to earnestly support the Journal by contributing articles of research value. The transcription system followed by Tamil Lexicon may be closely adhered to. The Journal has become bilingual by accepting for publication research articles in Tamil and English.

The Editors of the Journal take this opportunity to express their gratitude to UNESCO-CIPSH for their kind assistance in bringing out this Journal.

CHIEF EDITOR

Towards a Synthesis of Philosophy and Art

MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH

IL m'est particulièrement agréable de m'adresser à vous en ce jour où s'ouvre le premier congrès international d'études tamiles qui ait jamais été organisé en Occident.

La session à laquelle il m'a été donné d'assister à Madras en 1968 apparaissait comme un témoignage de la vitalité actuelle de la culture tamile. Avec la présence des sages, détenteurs du savoir traditionnel, avec l'intense participation des masses, beaucoup d'entre vous ont pu constater sur place, comme je l'ai ressenti moi-même, l'enracinement profond de cette culture dans le peuple d'où elle est issue.

Après le retour aux sources, il y a deux ans, au coeur du Tamil Nadu, voici maintenant, avec cette session de Paris, l'expansion, le plein développement du dialogue international. La présence aujourd'hui de tant de savants venus de pays si divers, d'Europe et d'Amérique comme d'Asie, est la preuve, combien émouvante pour moi, de l'intérêt porté actuellement dans le monde à cette antique culture de l'Inde. La session de Madras était pour la culture tamile un symbole de permanence ; celle de Paris apparaît comme un témoignage de son rayonnement.

Pour un tel témoignage, aucun lieu ne pouvait être mieux choisi que le Collège de France, établi depuis la Renaissance comme un foyer de libre recherche, selon la grande tradition humaniste, avide de comprendre la pensée humaine et d'en reconnaître la dignité sous toutes les formes de civilisation.

Vous êtes, Monsieur le Président, chez vous dans cette tradition d'humanisme comme vous êtes chez vous, à Pondichery, dans l'Institut français d'études indiennes que vous animez depuis sa fondation en 1955. Et je sais bien que cette conférence internationale organisée par vos soins, Monsieur le professeur Filliozat, n'est qu' une manifestation parmi tant d'autres activités comprenant notamment d'innombrables travaux de recherche, moins spectaculaires peut-être mais fondamentaux, et une impressionnante série de publications, où la plus large part est faite aux cultures dravidiennes. Cette extension du champ des études indiennes et ce renouvellement des méthodes, qui se poursuit activement sous nos yeux, la présence icimême de tant de congressistes et la diversité des institutions représentées en donnent un témoignage impressionnant.

Comment expliquer cette évolution rapide des études orientales qui met aujourd'hui l'accent sur des civilisations jadis méconnues par les spécialistes ? Parmi les nombreuses causes des tendances nouvelles de la recherche, il m'apparaît qu'il en est de deux ordres : les unes sont liées à l'évolution même de la science, les autres tiennent aux transformations actuelles de la communauté mondiale et des relations internationales.

Evolution de la méthode scientifique tout d'abord : l'indianisme du XIXe siècle, dont il n'est pas question de contester l'immense apport dans le domaine de l'érudition, a été trop souvent dominé par le désir romantique de retrouver, à travers le sanskrit, l'image originaire des ancêtres indo-européens. Le titre d'Ārya devait conférer leurs lettres de noblesse aux plus antiques peuplements de l'Europe. Il ne s'agissait pas tant alors de connaître l'Inde, dans sa réalité complexe, que de donner une dimension plus vaste à l'Antiquité gréco-latine. La philologie indienne devenait un prolongement des Belles-Lettres classiques. De même, dans leur souci de remonter aux origines indo-européennes, les cherchoeurs avaient tendance à priviligier les aspects archaiques. C'est précisément cette vision européo-centrirque, archaïsante et teintée de nostalgie romantique qui se trouve abandonnée par la recherche actuelle. Il ne s'agit plus de regarder l'Inde de l'extérieur come le miroir d'une Europe originaire, mais de la considérer telle qu'elle est dans sa réalité propre. D'où le mouvement actuel des chercheurs, surtout parmi les jeunes, vers les aspects authentiques, intérieurs, de l'Inde, dont la culture tamile est une des expressions les plus vivantes. Modifiant son objet, la science a donc renouvelé ses méthodes.

De plus, ce renouvellement dans l'approche scientifique coïncidait avec l'accession à l'indépendance de nombreux pays d'Asie, comme d'Afrique, et à une prise de conscience plus profonde par eux-mêmes de leur identité culturelle.

Ils ne se voulaient plus comme prétextes d'érudition ou simples objets d'études, mais comme sujets et partenaires de plein droit au dialogue entre toutes les cultures. Plus encore, la notion de pluralisme culturel vaut également pour les cultures diverses à l'intérieur d'un même Etat. En vérité, il n'y a plus de cultures minoritaires ou provinciales. Dans l'état actuel des connaissances, des communications et des relations internationales, chacune des cultures est présente à toutes les autres. Chaque culture vaut, non par son particularisme, mais par ce qu'elle comporte d'universel et par sa capacité d'enrichir le patrimoine mondial. Or, il se trouve que la culture tamile a été caractérisée, par les spécialistes dont vous êtes, comme un humanisme, où la philosophie, le langage et l'expression artistique sont unifiés par les valeurs éthiques et s'intègrent pour devenir une morale, une règle de vie. D'où l'attrait non pas exotique et particulariste, mais général et humain que la culture tamile exerce sur ceux qui l'approchent.

THERE IS STILL ANOTHER TREND in present research which may motivate a renewal of interest in Tamil studies, and this is the increasing trend towards interdisciplinary studies. While in the past the main tool for Indian studies was the classical discipline of philology, modern research approaches the subject from a variety of viewpoints, applying such disciplines as cultural anthropology, sociology, economics, archæology, history of arts and literatures.

Such an interdisciplinary approach is most appropriate for the study of a civilization where philosophical and ethical values are closely related to artistic expression, to constitute a close-knit unity. This is eminently the case with Tamil civilization where the synthesis of Carnatic music, dance and drama in Bharatanatyam and Kathakali, the image of the universe and the symbols of spiritual life embodied in the temples, the union of historical tradition, moral teachings and poetical achievements in Sangam literature, to take only three examples, are standing witnesses of the Tamil inclination towards an integrated, organic view of life.

Such a style of civilization could be properly investigated and presented only as seen through recent developments in interdisciplinary research. This interdisciplinary method appears in the very structure and composition of your International Association for Tamil Studies. It is also clearly expressed in the programme of your present Conference.

One of the points on your agenda also reflects another growing need in your field of studies : the need to implant centres and institutions for the study of a given culture within the region itself where this culture is still a living reality. There again we can discover a meeting point between the new trends in scientific research and a changing world situation. The times are gone when a culture could be studied from the remote quietness and seclusion of a well-equipped library. The demands of disciplines such as cultural anthropology and other social sciences, of archaeology or musicology are for field research or direct contact with the human and physical environment. On the other hand, the deeper awareness of their cultural identity in newly independent or developing countries gives a greater incentive to their scholars to take an active part in the study and presentation of their own heritage. This gradually changes oriental studies into an experience in international co-operation, where analysis from outside and original evidence from within meet in a meaningful dialogue. The decision taken at your last session to assist in creating an International Institute for Tamil Studies to be established in Madras, and your intention to consider the statutes and research programmes for the Institute at your present session, stand as good examples of those creative trends in modern oriental studies.

The recognition of a necessity to consider oriental cultures, from inside and for their own sake ; a growing attention given not only to

historical but also to contemporary themes ; the interdisciplinary approach ; the gradual implantation of research within the areas to be studied and the wider framework for international scholarly co-operation: such are then the main trends typified by your Association. But such are also the reasons and the objectives of UNESCO interest and participation in your efforts.

In fact, the resolution on Tamil studies adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its last session, in November 1968, was primarily based upon recommendations and requests originating from your Conference, as stated in the opening paragraph of the text, which I shall now read to you :

> ' The General Conference
>
> *Taking Note* of the important conclusions for the promotion of cultural understanding and oriental scholarship reached at the Second International Conference-Seminar on Tamil Studies held in Madras on 3-10, January 1968 ;
>
> *Having received* a report on the proposal arising from the Conference for the creation of an International Institute of Tamil Studies ;
>
> *Authorises* the Director-General to assist India and other interested Member-States in the creation of the above Institute in Madras, India ;
>
> *Invites* the Member-States to associate themselves in the creation and membership of the Institute, including the mutual assistance and co-operation required.'

The implementation of that Resolution started immediately after the General Conference. Direct aid was given as a first stage of co-operation, under an agreement with the Indian Government, for the purchase of books and equipment, to be used by the future Institute, and also for starting a scholarly programme, with the preparation of a new edition of the *Tēvāram* scripts. Simultaneously, promotional action was started, at international level, to enlist the co-operation of Member-States and Universities interested in Tamil studies. The action developed in three ways : co-ordination with such representative scholarly organizations as the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, to associate them in sponsoring Tamil studies ; a mission, undertaken in 1969 under a UNESCO grant, by Mr. A. Subbiah, Member-Secretary of the Managing Committee, who visited fourteen countries and more than fifty Universities and research institutes in Asia, Europe and America. The results of his liaison and information mission, which proved most successful, will be presented by himself in the

course of this session. Finally, UNESCO was called upon, by the French authorities and by the organisers of the present meeting, to assist in the preparation of this Third International Conference-Seminar on Tamil Studies.

Your deliberations and advice will be essential to launch the second phase of UNESCO aid for the promotion of Tamil studies. In fact, the scholarly programme to be outlined here and your views on the scope and methods of work of the International Institute to be established in Madras, will be transmitted to the next session of the General Conference of UNESCO which will meet in three months' time here in Paris, and your recommendations may well prove to be as effective in making the project operational as they were, two years ago, in launching the idea. Your advice will be especially helpful in suggesting priority studies corresponding to the present trends and needs of international research.

An indication of such trends and needs may already be found in the agenda of your discussions and I would like to present a few remarks on the topics which the organizers of the Conference selected as being the most appropriate for a debate on Tamil culture, in the present situation of oriental studies. Allow me, in doing so, to use my own Tamil language. I am sure that you will understand my pride and emotion in seeing it recognised here, in this place which embodies the highest traditions of Western thought.

இந்த மாநாட்டிலே முதற்கண் கவனம் செலுத்தப்படும் பொருட்களில் தமிழ் மொழி, இலக்கியம் இவை இடம்பெற்றிருப்பது மிகப் பொருத்தமாகும். இரண்டாயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கும் மேலாக அழியாமல், குறையாமல் நிலைத்திருக்கும் தமிழ் மொழியே தமிழ் மக்களின் இடையறாத தொடர்ச்சிக்குப் பெரிதும் காரணமாகும். கற்றோர் கவனத்தைக் கவர்ந்த மற்றொரு தனிச்சிறப்பும் இம் மொழிக்கு உண்டு; இது சமுதாயத்தின் சிறப்பு மொழியாக மதம், கல்வி போன்ற துறைகளுக்கு மட்டும் பயன்படவில்லை. மக்களின் அன்றாட வாழ்வோடு இரண்டறக் கலந்து ஜீவசக்தியுடன் இன்றும் விளங்குகிறது.

தமிழ்ப் பெருமக்களின் நாகரிகத்தில் இரு விசேஷ இயல்புகள் உண்டு. இவையே அவர்கள் மொழிப்பற்றுக்குக் காரணம் கூறுகின்றன. ஒன்று, சங்கம் நிறுவியது; அன்று உருவான இலக்கியங்கள் சங்க இலக்கியங்களென்றே கூறப் பட்டன. மற்றொன்று, தொல்காப்பியம் போன்ற விரிவான, நுட்பமான இலக்கண நூல்கள் அக்காலத்திலேயே வழக்கிலிருந்தது. இவ்வாறு ஒரு கலாசாரத்தின் தொடர்ச்சிக்கு மிக சக்திவாய்ந்த சாதனங்களான இரண்டு அம்சங்களும்—அதாவது மொழி வளர்க்கும் சங்கங்களும், அந்த வளர்ச்சி முறையோடு அமைவதற்கான இலக்கணங்களும்—தொன்மையான தமிழ் சரித்திரத்தின் ஆரம்ப ஏடுகளிலேயே ஆழமாகப் பதிந்துவிட்டன.

இருப்பினும், இந்த உலகத் தமிழ் மாநாடு சொல்லையும், எழுத்தையும் மாத்திரம் முக்கியமாகக் கருதவில்லை. தென்னிந்திய கலாசாரத்தின் சின்னங்களான நிர்மாணக் கலை, மற்றும் சிற்பம், சித்திரம் போன்ற எழில் கலைகளும் இங்கு தகுந்த இடம்பெறுகின்றன. பல துறையினர் கூடி நடத்தும் இம் மாநாட்டின் பிரிவுகளில் முதல் முறையாக புதைபொருள் ஆராய்ச்சிக்கும் முக்கிய இடம் கொடுக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. பழங்குடி மக்களான திராவிடர்களின் நாகரிகமே இந்திய உபகண்டத்தின் நாகரிகத்திற்கு முன்னோடி என்பது

ஆராய்ச்சியாளர் கருத்து. சிந்து நதி பள்ளத்தாக்கில் அகழ்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்ட புதைபொருள் சின்னங்கள் இக்கருத்துக்குப் புதிய ஆதரவு அளித்தன. பிறகு (கம்போடியா நாட்டில்), கிமர் கட்டிடக் கலையில், அண்டத்தின் சின்னமாகக் கருதப்படும் மலைவடிவக் கோயில்களைக் காண்கிறோம். சிந்து நதியிலிருந்து கம்போடியா வரை—அதற்கும் அப்பால் போரோபுதூர் வரை—தமிழ்க் கலாசாரம் விரிந்து பரந்து, காலத்தால் கரையாது விளங்கியதற்குச் சான்றாக பல சின்னங்கள் வரிசை வரிசையாக அணிவகுத்து நிற்கின்றன. ஸ்ரீரங்கம் ரங்கநாதர் ஆலயம், ராமேச்வரம் கோயில் முதற்கொண்டு பல தென்னிந்திய கலைச் சின்னங்களைப் பாதுகாக்கும் நீண்டகாலத் திட்டத்தில் யுனெஸ்கோ ஸ்தாபனம் ஒத்துழைக்கிறது.

இத்துறையிலும் நிர்மாணக் கலைபற்றிய பல தொன்மையான நூல்கள் சிற்ப சாத்திரத்துள் அடங்கியுள்ளன; இவை மானஸாரா, மாயமாதா போன்ற ஆகம நூல்களைச் சேர்ந்தவை. தமிழரின் கோயில் கட்டும் கலைபற்றியும், அவர்கள் கையாண்ட நகர அமைப்புபற்றியும், இவற்றிலிருந்து இன்றைய மாணவன் அறிந்துகொள்ளலாம்.

இதே ஆன்மீக உட்பொருளையே சிற்பக் கலையிலும், மற்றும் அதை மருவிய கலைகளிலும் காண்கிறோம். சைவத்தைத் தழுவிய பல மஹா புருஷர்கள் எவ்வுயிர்க்கும் பொதுவான பரம்பொருளைப்பற்றித் தங்கள் உணர்ச்சிகளை, கவிதை வடிவிலே அளித்திருக்கிறார்கள். இதற்கு இணையாகத் தென்னிந்திய வெண்கலச் சிற்பங்களில் பெரிதும் காணப்படும் நடராஜர் சிற்பம், மனிதகுலத்தின் மாபெரும் கலைச்சின்னங்களில் ஒன்றாகவே அமைந்துவிட்டது. இது சிவபெருமானின் மற்றொரு வடிவமாகும். அந்த ஆடலரசன் உருவத்திலே உயிரும் உயிரின்மையும் ஒன்றே—ரூபமும் அரூபமும் ஒன்றே—அமைதியும் அசைவும் ஒன்றே. அந்த ஆனந்தத் தாண்டவத்தில் உடலும் ஆவியும் இரண்டறக் கலந்துவிட்டது என்கிறார் ஆனந்த குமாரஸ்வாமி. இவர் இலங்கையைச் சேர்ந்த புகழ்பெற்ற சரித்திர ஆசிரியரும் கலா விமர்சகரும் ஆவார். T. S. எலியட்டின் கவிதையிலே நான் நடராஜப்பெருமானின் இதே வடிவைக் காண்கிறேன். அதன் பொழிப்புரை பின்வருமாறு:

> 'சுழல்கின்ற உலகத்தில் சுழலாத ஒரு இடம். ஊனுமில்லை, ஊன் இல்லா மலுமில்லை; அதிலிருந்துமில்லை, அதை நோக்கியுமில்லை; அந்த அசைவற்ற இடத்தில் நடனமுண்டு. ஆனால், அங்கு தடையுமில்லை அசைவுமில்லை. அதை நிலையானது என்று நினைக்கவேண்டாம், இறந்தகாலமும் வருங்காலமும் ஒருங்கே இணைந்து சேரும் இடத்தில் . . . அந்த அசைவற்ற இடத்தைத் தவிர, நடனமே இல்லை, நடனம் மட்டும் உண்டு.'

ஆன்மீக அறிவுடை நிலைக்கும், நன்னெறியில் அமையும் வாழ்க்கை அனுபவத்திற்கும் உள்ள நெருங்கிய தொடர்பு, தமிழ் கலாசாரத்தின் அடிப்படைப் பண்பாடு என்பது பலரும் அறிந்த உண்மை. உலக சக்தியையும், வாழ்க்கையில் உறுதியான தன்னம்பிக்கையையும் குறளிலே கண்டார் டாக்டர் ஆல்பர்ட் ஸ்வெட்ஜர். இலக்கியம், தத்துவம் இவற்றில் தனிச் சிறப்புடன் விளங்கும் இந்தப் புராதன நூல், எளிய நீதிநெறியின் வழியே இயங்கும் மனித இனத்தையே இலட்சியமாக சித்தரிக்கிறது என்று அவர் கூறுகிறார்.

இந்திய நாகரிகத்தில் தமிழ் மக்களின் பங்கும் இந்த மாநாட்டில் விவாதிக்கப்படும். குறிப்பாக ஸம்ஸ்கிருத மொழியோடு இதன் தொடர்பும் ஆராயப்படும். இதுவரை திராவிடர்களைப்பற்றிய ஆராய்ச்சி அதிகம் கவனிக்கப்படாமல் இருந்தது. இன்று பெரும்பாலும் இதை இணைத்தே ஸம்ஸ்கிருத மொழி ஆராய்ச்சியைப் புதுப்பிக்க முடியுமென்று அம்மொழிப் பண்டிதர்களே உறுதியாகக் கூறுகிறார்கள். உங்கள் சொற்பொழிவுகளும், விவாதங்களும் இப்பொருள்பற்றிப் புதிய கருத்துக்களை அளிக்கும் என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை.

இருப்பினும், தமிழ்க் கலாசாரத்தின் தனிச் சிறப்புகளைப்பற்றியோ அல்லது பொதுவாக அது இந்திய கலாசாரத்தின் ஒரு அங்கம் என்பதுபற்றியோ ஆராய்வதோடு இந்த மாநாட்டின் நோக்கம் முழுமைபெறாது. வெளிநாடுகளுடன் தமிழ்நாடும், தமிழ் மக்களும் கொண்டிருந்த உறவு இங்கு விவாதத்

துக்குரிய மிக முக்கியமான பொருளாகும். தமிழாராய்ச்சி என்பது உண்மையாகவே ஒரு சர்வதேச ஆராய்ச்சி என்பதற்குப் பல சான்றுகள் உண்டு. அவற்றில் சில:

1. தமிழர் நாகரிகம் கடல் கடந்து, இந்தோனேஷியா, மலேஷியா, பிலிப்பைன்ஸ் முதலிய தென்கிழக்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளுக்குப் பரவியது.
2. சீன தேசத்தில் புதைபொருள் ஆராய்ச்சி ஸ்தலங்களில் கண்டுபிடிக்கப் பட்ட தமிழ்க் கல்வெட்டுகள்.
3. பர்மா, கம்போடியா, தாய்லாந்து நாடுகளில் நடைமுறையில் காணப்படும் விழாக்கள், சடங்குகள்.
4. இந்தியப் பெருங்கடல் மூலம் நடத்தப்பட்ட வாணிபத்தைப்பற்றிய ஆராய்ச்சி, கிழக்கு ஆப்பிரிக்காவின் சரித்திரத்திற்கான மூலதாரங்களில் ஒன்ருக இருத்தல்.

விரிந்து பரந்த இந்த ஆதிக்கத்திற்கு ஒரு தனிச் சிறப்பு உண்டு. அது, அதன் பூரண சமாதான இயல்பு ஆகும். அநேகமாக, சரித்திரத்தில் வேறு எந்த நாகரிகமும் கத்தியின்றி, இரத்தமின்றி, முழுமையும் வாணிபம், கலாசாரம் இவை மூலமாகவே, தனது செல்வாக்கை இவ்வளவு தூரம் பரப்பியதில்லை. ஆங்காங்கு உள்ள பண்பாடுகளோடு தமிழ்ப் பண்பாடு நன்கு ஒன்றி இணைந்தது. மனம் திறந்து நிறைந்த இந்த சர்வதேசத் தொடர்பின் அஸ்திவாரம், கடல் கடந்த வாணிபம் மாத்திரமல்ல—தமிழனின் ஆழ்ந்த இதயபூர்வமான மனிதாபிமானம் என்றே கூறவேண்டும். இதையே ஒரு தமிழ்ப் புலவர், 'யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்' என்று கூறுகிருர்.

அகில உலகத்திற்கும் பொதுவான இந்தப் பண்பாடு, இன்றைய சர்வதேச கலாசாரத் தொடர்புகளினுல் புத்துயிர் பெறலாம். நீங்கள் தொன்மையான பழம்பெறும் இலக்கியம், பண்பாடுகள் இவற்றை ஆராய்வதோடு, இன்றைய தமிழ் இலக்கியம், கலாசார வளர்ச்சி இவற்றையும் ஆராயப்போவது இந்த மாநாட்டின் மிக முக்கியமான அம்சமென்று நான் கருதுகிறேன். தமிழாராய்ச்சி பூரண உயிர்த்துடிப்புள்ள ஒரு கலாசாரத்தோடு சம்பந்தப் பட்டது. அது, கேவலம் மொழி அல்லது சரித்திர ஆராய்ச்சியாகமட்டும் இருந்துவிடக்கூடாது. இந்த ஆராய்ச்சி இன்று, நல்லதொரு கலாசாரத்தின் நறுமணத்தை உலகெங்கும் பரப்புவதற்குரிய சாதனமாகத் தமிழை உயர்த்த வேண்டும். இதுவே நமது குறிக்கோளென்று நான் நினைக்கிறேன்.

Monsieur le Président, me tenant à vos côtés il y a deux ans à Madras, sur la plage de Marina, ouverte à tous les vents, et inaugurant la Deuxième Conférence internationale des Etudes tamiles, devant un demi-million de Tamils, savants et gens du peuple mêlés, je lançais un appel :

> " As a Unescon, I have one small quarrel with orientalists—be they Africanists, Sinologists, Indologists or Tamilologists—to use a felicitous phrase, their predominant and seemingly exclusive interest in the hoary past of the language and culture in question. But as the statues unveiled yesterday bring home, Tamil is a language which has continuous links from two thousand years ago (Avvaiyar and Valluvar) to yesterday (Pope and Bharatidasan), and on to today—there is one statue in the centre of the city to remind us of this. Tamil research must therefore deal not only with the Sangam epoch, but also with the Annadurai period, not only with the Madurai movement, but also with the Malaysia and Mombasa

versions. It must deal with the glorious past and also with the crying and living present."

Je sens bien aujourd'hui que je n'ai pas besoin de renouveler cet appel. Il a été entendu. Il est dans la nature même des choses. Les tendances nouvelles, les développements les plus récents, au cours méme de ces deux dernières années, dans les études tamiles, et votre propre conception de cette conférence établissent un équilibre entre le présent et le passé. La recherche historique apparaït comme un moyen d'éclairer la compréhension d'une civilisation, d'une pensée, qui sont réels et vécus intensément aujourd'hui même. Aussi bien par vos travaux, par votre volonté de faire progresser la recherche scientifique et de renforcer la coopération culturelle, voue faites partie vous-mêmes de la réalité internationale telle qu'elle est vécue de nos jours, et vous contribuez à faire vivre l'UNESCO. C'est dans cet esprit que je vous salue et que je vous présente les voeux de mon Organisation pour la pleine réuissite de votre conférence.

The text of the Inaugural Address by the Acting Director-General of UNESCO at the Third International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies, Paris, July 15, 1970.

The Tamil Language in the Modern World

An Essay on Contemporary Tamil Fiction, Its Younger Writers and Their Relationship with Their Society.

ALBERT B. FRANKLIN

The Tamil language is a matter of deeply emotional and political concern throughout the Tamil country. It is not immediately apparent to the inheritors of this great Tamil language-culture complex that their birthright is a proper interest of international scholars. Theirs, they feel, is the right to criticize, to praise individual works, to investigate the grammar and the development of the language to determine the historicity and the dates of great literary and linguistic events and phenomena of past ages, and to state positions of broad scope relevant to such subjects as the present one.

There is a certain justice in this attitude. It has become increasingly apparent over the last century, that Tamil is indeed one of the world's great languages and that in it is expressed one of the world's great and ancient literatures.

Unusual pride in the literary language has persisted from most ancient times in Tamil Nadu when rulers gloried in literary achievement. It has persisted through the period of the British Raj, into the most modern period, which has seen an orator and playwright, C. N. Annadurai* (1909-1969) joyfully carried to power for love of his language by the overwhelming majority of the Tamil people.

Throughout ancient Tamil literature, in the Sangam poems of love, in the *Silapadikaram*, an early romantic epic, and in the later poetry of the Saivaite and Vaisnavite saints, the subject matter and the treatment are strong and mingle two intensely Tamil traditions, first, that of delight in the forms and purity of the language, and second, that of exultation in the flexible and complete expression it affords to the full range of human experience, from the ugly and the terrifying and disgusting, to the erotically exciting and the transcendentally beautiful.

Such mystic outpourings as the poems of Thirumular, such philosophical penetration as that of Sankara and Ramanuja, such scientific brains as that of the other Ramanuja, the mathematician, or that of the late Nobel Prize winner C. V. Raman do not arise in barren soil. Nor

do the exquisite arts of Carnatic music and Bharata Natyam. Imagination of this category springs from a richly intricate and articulate linguistic symbolism.

Though it is now well over three hundred and fifty years old, the interplay and mutual influence of Tamil and English in South India is still of primary importance both to government and to education. With their culturally welcoming temperament and linguistic facility, the Tamils quickly became, judged by any relative standard, the best speakers and writers of English on the sub-continent. During the century and a half of the East India Company, and the ninety years of the British Raj, the facile Tamil mind played an important role both within the government, and against the Raj. Within the government, the Tamil clerk was indispensable in every office. Outside the government, India's great English-language newspapers, such as *The Hindu,* constantly observed, in classic English and with scholarly awareness of British juridical principles, each of the departures from these principles that the Raj appeared to embark upon. These newspapers became a schooling ground in government for Tamils, and thus indirectly an extraordinary preparation of the Tamil language itself for its future role as a language of state government and a language of analysis of governmental activity and of interstate and state-center relationships. Knowledge of English gave an advantage to the Tamil clerks and jurists in the pre-independence period, and whetted their feelings of separateness from the British overlords, whose language they spoke and wrote, in many cases with Oxonian or Cantabridgian style and pungency.

It was not only the British culture and language which arrived with the Raj, but the English grammar school and university system as well. The adoption of a school system similar to the British, offering elementary and secondary education to all, had a revolutionary effect upon traditional activities of groups within the society that has not yet fully played itself out. The effect of this ' revolution ' was to release the searching light of this complex instrument, the Tamil language, upon areas it was not previously its habit to consider.

The use of the English language in administration, and as an educational medium in an English type school system quickly underscored the essential nature of the Tamil language of a century ago as a *diglossia,* one arm of which was used in traditional, that is ceremonial, forms of expression, and the other in oral communication among villagers and among townspeople. In the gap between these two branches of the diglossia lay the entire area of expression commonly held among modern nations as necessary to thought, education and government. Even more important, the whole subtle area of discourse denoted by such words as ' irony ', ' sarcasm ', ' implication ', ' caricature ' and ' humor

fell (so far as written material is concerned) in the no-man's-land between the two branches.

Human nature abhors such a vacuum. So Tamil writing in this century has proved. It may be described practically in its entirety as an attempt to meet the needs of language in a modern society ; to bridge the gap between the two arms of the diglossia. Some of these attempts were unconscious, some were counterproductive, but the essential nature of Tamil writing itself was profoundly altered by the revealed existence of the basic inadequacy in the customary use of the language in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The initial intellectual reactions to this situation may be succinctly classified as follows :

1. *Mastery of English* as a means of belonging to the governing elite. Examples of this type of reaction are offered by the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, Dr. Satyamurthy, Ex-President Radhakrishnan, C. Rajagopalachari, and Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar.

2. *Imitation of English* and continental literatures in Tamil for didactic purposes, moral, spiritual and political, and for the simple purpose of developing the reading habit and literacy in Tamil. This reaction is exemplified by the early Tamil novelist such as Vedanayakam Pillai (1826-1889), the serial novelist R. Krishnamurthi (Kalki) (1899-1954), and the articles on social and political affairs of Va Raa (1889-1951). The short stories, plays and novels of the late Chief Minister C. N. Annadurai also fall into this category, and it is a sidelight of much importance that Annadurai and Va Raa were close friends.

These two categories of reaction to the demonstrated vacuum were, of course, diametrically opposite in purpose, the one envisaging an English-speaking elite, controlling education and Government in a population largely unable to communicate except in spoken Tamil, and the other envisaging eventual modernization of the Tamil language itself, and along with it the thought processes of the electorate. In Tamil Nadu, the issue, as between these two approaches, is still very much in the balance. An English-speaking or English-knowing elite still controls business, administration, banking and the press. But, though English is widely spoken in Tamil Nadu today, there are no giants in mastery of the English tongue to compare with those mentioned above. Their day is gone. On the other hand, the seed of literate habits in Tamil, sown by Kalki, has grown to be a very luxuriant garden indeed.

The habit of literacy generates the habit of literary production, and the orderly development of the didactic approach to the problem of a modern Tamil language was disturbed in the thirties of this century by

that awkward, unaccountable, unmanageable, unpredictable thing called genius. C. Virudachalam, known as Pudumaipittan (1906-1948), was born into a world in which Tamil newspapers and periodicals were already a reality. The didactic serial novels of Kalki and his followers were retrograde and condescending in his view. As each one appeared, he scornfully named its European source or model. His short stories brought modern Tamil for the first time to the literary expression of material which was both new and profoundly Tamil in nature. He may be said to have introduced the edge of irony in Tamil. No serious Tamil writer could ever write fiction again without thinking of Pudumaipittan. He appears not to have realized that the social change represented by his attitude towards letters was made possible by the literary missionaries on the Kalki model. Without Kalki, there could have been no appreciation of Pudumaipittan. As it was, following Pudimaipittan, and his contemporaries such as Mowni (S. Mani, b. 1909), and Ku Pa Raa (1902-1944), the way was open for the development of a truly modern literature both of fiction and of literary criticism, of which Pudumaipittan's great admirer, Ka Na Subramaniam (b. 1910) became the leading exponent and consequently, though sometimes harsh and partisan in his judgments, a hero of a younger generation of writers. The extent of the revolution of thought and relationships implied here can only be understood by those familiar with the South Indian scene, both the respect for status in all its ramifications, and the characteristic Indian difficulty in expressing or accepting constructive criticism. As E. M. Forster says, in 3 *Cheers for Democracy*, ' Indians have a marked capacity for worship or for denunciation, but not much critical sense, as criticism is understood in the West.'

Nonetheless, just as the appearance of the live and disrespectful genius of the language was inevitable after the missionary work of Kalki and the imitators of British and continental writing, so the development of objective criticism is now inevitable. These changes do not come easily, however, and the strong scholastic tradition in Tamil letters still fails to see that there is room for both scholastic classicism and modern communicative expression concerning present-day realities in a present-day medium. Pudumaipittan's philosophically ironic vein and his occasionally deep despair are excoriated as if these were faults a writer should avoid at all costs, and Ka Na Subramaniam was severely punished socially for an alleged lack of even-handedness in his attempts to bring the light of criticism to play on Tamil literature. There was a long road ahead.

Once Independence arrived and with it a greater freedom in the disposition of stocks of newsprint, the gateway to modern communication was ajar. Within three years after independence two new types of publication appeared, new at least in scope and distribution. These

were, first, the mass distribution popular Tamil language magazine, whose circulation exceeded all expectations, rising rapidly to the hundreds of thousands. Now one of them, *Kumudam*, has surpassed three hundred thousand, and there are four following close behind. Another type of publication which appeared at this time was the politically-motivated drama and story directed toward upsetting the social order in which the Brahmin landholder typified the established power.

The village drama is a branch of Tamil literature which has an unbroken tradition into the remote past. In the long pre-modern period, this drama was an important device for communication, and one of the few vehicles in which the village speech and declamation in the scholastic manner (if not in scholastic purity) were linked, and the gap between them bridged at least momentarily. It was the only mode of literary expression in which something recognizable as humor occurred. In the post-Independence period, a group of writers appeared with roots deep in the rich background of Tamil village drama, fully aware of the opportunity afforded by mass media and an audience of literate masses, and determined to use their talent and their language for political purposes. These purposes centered around the idea of an enlightened regionalism, in which the Tamil language, so greatly beloved, would come into its own as the language of the people, their government, their education, and their thought. These writers used the short story, filmscript and radio-play as their media. The movement was outstandingly successful, and its leading members are today at the head of government in the Tamil country. Through their political success, these writers, of whom the present Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Honourable M. Karunanidhi (b. 1923) is an outstanding living example, have brought the Tamil country to the verge of great decisions with respect to the use of Tamil in education and government. Regulations have been promised assuring first consideration for applicants for State government positions for persons who have qualified through education in the Tamil medium, as opposed to the English medium. These measures are naturally opposed by the English-knowing élite. Decisions along this line are of the essence of the situation created in India by the division of the country into linguistic states, and are not the immediate focus of this paper.

To summarize the post-Independence situation : the first seventy-five years or so of inchoate attempts at obtaining a Tamil readership in the subjects with which modern mass communication is largely concerned brought into being in the post-Independence period three broadly identifiable types of authorship motivation : didactic, commercial, and political. In addition to these three objective types of authorship motivation, and cutting across them, another had appeared, which we may call subjective, that is, the motivation of the writer as writer : the joy of creation in writing. This class of authorship motivation is best exempli-

fied among pre-independence writers by Pudumaipittan, and it furnished proof, if proof were needed that the didactic motivation of the pioneers of modern Tamil such as Kalki had borne fruit, that Tamil was now a medium adequate to attract the born writer, and eventually (perhaps already in the case of Pudumaipittan), the modern literary genius. This somewhat arbitrary division of Tamil writers by motivation admittedly has no connection with quality, nor does it take into account the fact that individual cases usually show a mixture of two or more of these four motivations. Annadurai, for example, was a political writer whose works vibrate with the joy of writing. It does, however, permit discussion of writing in Tamil along the lines of these four divisions : (1) the commercial writer and publisher, (2) the political writer, (3) the writer with didactic motivation, and (4) the creative writer.

(1) *The Commercial Writer*

The spectacular growth of the commerce of writing in popular weekly and monthly periodicals as light and casual literature, comment and gossip in Tamil is a feature of the post-Independence period. Though many of the writers might properly be referred to as ' hacks ', the general pride in the Tamil language maintains a certain level of orthodox correctness of expression among them. Also, there are found among the commercially motivated writers some professionals who follow directly in the path of the great Kalki, producing in serial form novels directly in the British nineteenth-century tradition, undoubtedly a good preparation so far as literacy is concerned for the public who reads them.

(2) *The Political Writer*

The political writers of the D.M.K. (Tamil Nadu's leading political party) have attained their political eminence because of their literary ability. As might be expected, several of the state cabinet ministers edit periodicals of their own, which contain, along with political material, literary efforts, particularly short stories, and occasionally poems, of literary merit. It is in the nature of the Party itself that a high degree of literary talent in the Tamil language is displayed in all these periodicals. However, the broader approach to the science of politics which is usually meant in the West by a reference to political writing, or ' political science ' is largely absent in Tamil Nadu. The reason for this is not far to seek. It was of the nature of the Indian independence struggle that the leaders of that struggle, on the Indian side, were, almost without exception, masters of the English language. Among these, several Tamils were outstanding political commentators, to wit : C. Rajagopalachari, Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, ex-President of India ; Congress Leader Satyamurthi, Rt. Honorable Srinivasa Sastri, K. Santhanam, the successive editors of *The Hindu*, and Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar, to name a few whose English would put to shame most English-speaking political leaders and commentators of any nationality today. All of these leaders

and commentators showed a marked preference for the English language in their serious political writings. Some, for example, Rajaji and K. Santhanam, offset this tendency with simple writings in Tamil obviously addressed with some condescension to a less discriminating readership. Allowing for the fact that their political writings were addressed to a wider audience than Tamil country itself, much would have been gained by their directly addressing their Tamil audience at an adult level of thought in their native language. But they belonged to an English-speaking Tamil élite and had little desire to appeal to a non-English-knowing Tamil audience. They could not conceive of people who did not read English as fully educated.

There is still no body of serious modern political thought and criticism written in Tamil available to the Tamil-reading student. Tamil Nadu's most widely read serious fiction writer today, Jayakanthan, (1968), says in his preface to a recent collection of short stories, ' I recently said in a Seminar, " There is nothing for me to read in Tamil ". I spoke in confidence that I was among scholars, and I spoke from personal knowledge of the worthless gossip and meaningless rubbish coming out in lavish abundance in current Tamil publications : There is nothing worth studying in Tamil. Even Marxism and Socialism can be studied only in English . . . . When they asked, " Then why continue piling up stories in Tamil ? " I replied, " Do you realize how many people there are like me for whom there is nothing to read in Tamil ? I write in Tamil to give them something to read ".' This situation, which Jayakanthan correctly describes, is a natural result of the fact that the English-knowing élite finds its current reading in English, and that current Tamil literature, both fiction and non-fiction, is produced for a non-English-knowing audience. Jayakanthan here defines himself, in the above quotation, as both a didactic writer [of Category (3)] and a political writer. He also belongs to the fourth category, those who write for the joy of writing.

(3) *The Didactic Writer*

The basically correct motivation of these writers, typified by Kalki, possesses an inherent flaw which reveals itself in the course of time. Since didactic writing is, essentially, a writing ' down ' to an imagined pupil, or a writing of moral tales for essentially immature minds, it excludes development to a truly adult literature in which the writer and reader are on a level, so to speak, the one writing and the other understanding in the same universe of discourse. The didactic mode runs very strong indeed in the course of Tamil literature, and, coupled with the general Indian respect for forefathers and for age, it creates a formidable barrier to the young intellectual in his quest for recognition. The purpose of the didacticism was originally, as mentioned above, to offer sustenance to an inchoate Tamil literate class, or reading public, believed

to be essentially immature in their tastes. In the course of time, however, the historical romance, adopted by Kalki for this purpose, degenerated in the hands of subsequent writers into a series of pseudo-historical novels similar to the weekly picture stories of *Prince Valiant* in the American Sunday supplements, and about as mature. Even at the hands of their initiator, these themes were never ' classics ' in the true sense of the word. Their function was to create a beginning of literacy, and their persistence in later years involves a fundamental change in character, a decadence into tales of make-believe or escape, in which the original educational element has vanished.

(4) *The Creative Writer*

These are, in Tamil Nadu as in all cultures, times and countries, the most important writers of all, and the rarest. Creative thought, in government or in education as in everything else, flowers in the soil of the imagination, not in the bureaucratic lingo of the government careerist, and not in the correct and sterile style of the didact and translator. The most important event, therefore, in the development of Tamil as a language of thought, recreation and education in the modern world, was the formation, in the early thirties, of the so-called *Manikodi* group, which first published the writings of Pudumaipittan, Mowni, Ku Pa Raa, and others whose names today are revered among vanguardist writers. Like journals of coteries everywhere, *Manikodi* (1932-1939) and its successors are legendary among members of the profession, and their editors and discoveries are the milestones of the history of modern and contemporary Tamil thought.

Manikodi was, in a sense, premature. The flowering of the imaginative literature of contemporary India had to await Independence. Though the *Manikodi* group stood as an example for the post-Independence writers, and though, from then onwards, there has been a sporadic succession of small reviews, it was C. S. Chellappa (b. 1912) who opened the pages of *Ezhutthu*, both publishing house and journal, to the rising flood of post-Independence writers in 1957, and kept it going continuously, inviting the output of experimental and vanguardist writers, until 1970. Most of the current creative writers of today in Tamil Nadu first found outlet in this or some other of the little literary journals. Foreign influence is strong among these writers, many of whom, though using different and later models, are as imitative of western styles as Kalki. Their models are, of course, more up-to-date, including T. S. Eliot, Kafka, Gorki, Beckett, Borges, Hemingway, Sartre and Faulkner. Above all they are serious in their attempt to come to grips with a perennial problem of the imaginative writer, that of holding up a mirror to their society and its members. Some have succeeded so well as to achieve universal validity and intellectual critical acclaim without winning a broad reading public. Others have succeeded in attaining a

JOTS Style Sheet

(For Publication in the *Journal of Tamil Studies*)

1. The Mss.

Articles and Book Reviews sent for publication must be typewritten, on one side of the sheet only, double-spaced, preferably on paper of standard size, 8½ by 11 inches. Sufficiently wide margin (at least one inch on the right and two inches on the left) should be available for editorial work. Number of the pages of the copy in the upper right hand corner, including all sheets of the manuscript in a single pagination. The Manuscript should be in Tamil or in English.

2. System of Transliteration

In transcribing Tamil words or texts into English, contributors are requested to make use of the transliteration system adopted by the Madras University's *Tamil Lexicon* (Vol. I-VII 1924-1939). However, discretion may be exercised in spelling proper names which have a standard established spelling. e.g. Raja Rajan instead of more exact *rāca rācaṉ* or Annadurai for *aṇṇāturai*. Rigorous use of the diacritic symbols are to be made use of throughout the article.

Make four copies of the Mss. and please send three copies of them to the Chief Editor ensuring that all the four copies are identical.

3. Underscores

A single straight underscore indicates *italic type*, a double underscore SMALL CAPITALS a wavy underscore **boldface.** Make use of italics for title of Books and Journals and for all words foreign to English while writing in English or for all words foreign to Tamil while writing in Tamil. Use small capitals, where it seems essential, to emphasize a word, a phrase, or sentence in the text or to mark a technical term at its first occurrence.

The Chief Editor shall exercise his discretion in the final execution of underscores and headings, if necessary.

4. Quotations

Quotations may be in Tamil or in English. An authentic English translation of the quotation should be provided if the quotation is from any other language other than English. It may be given within brackets.

Only single quotation marks are to be employed except for quotes within quotes which should, however, be distinguished by double quotation marks.

5. Punctuation

The gloss of words given in Tamil (either in conventional orthography or in transliteration system) may be given immediately following the quotation: e.g. *Kuṭampai* (குடம்பை) *āṭu aṟicol* (ஆடூஉ அறிசொல்). Conventional punctuation marks are obligatory. Those who have no copy of the Lexicon for ready reference may refer to the inner flap of the last page of the *Journal of Tamil Studies.*

6. Footnotes

Footnotes are numbered serially through the article or review, or through one chapter of a longer work. It is to be indicated by a raised numeral following the word or passage to which it applies. It is not to be enclosed in parenthesis or to be indicated by * or † marks. Reference numbers follow marks of punctuation. All footnotes must appear after the main text and must *never* appear on the same page.

7. Bibliographical References

Full citation of literature referred to should be given in a bibliography at the end of each article or book review. Within the text of the article itself brief citation should be made, by giving the author's surname, the year of publication in brackets and page numbers where relevant. Such brief citations should be given in the body of the text, not in footnotes, unless they refer specifically to a statement made in a footnote. The full bibliography should be typed on a separate page of typescript with the heading REFERENCES. Each entry, arranged alphabetically, should consist of:

Author's Surname in SMALL CAPITALS given name(s), co-authors if any (with given names following), year of Publication and Edition (if necessary), Title of work and Publishers. Use suitable, uniform punctuation.

8. Abstracts

The Mss. submitted for publication should be accompanied by three copies of an informative abstract in about 100 words. It may be in Tamil or in English.

wide reading public and constant following. Their numbers are growing. All face an Indian dilemma which is particularly strong in Tamil Nadu. It is well expressed by K. Natwar-Singh, (1966), 'The development of modern Indian literature is marked by .... a certain dichotomy in the mental attitude of the writer. An intellectual tug-of-war still rages between traditionalism and progressivism. This conflict between orthodox and unorthodox is not unique to India, but there the class of loyalties is remarkable for its vehemence.'

In Tamil Nadu, this conflict is exacerbated by the general and proud awareness of a multi-millennial linguistic culture. The very fact that the earliest known specimens of Tamil literature contain elaborate rules for all aspects of grammar and style not only distinguishes the Tamil language from any other language on earth, but creates an exceptionally strong feeling of suspicion, if not hostility in some sectors towards those who would use the language in new and experimental ways. Paradoxically, the long literary tradition of Tamil is the reason why contemporary development of creative writing, both poetry and prose, and the development of style appropriate to modern subject has progressed much more rapidly over the past half century in all of the neighboring Dravidian languages rather than in Tamil. These other Dravidian languages are distinguished from Tamil largely by having accepted in varying degrees, some thousand years ago, the lexical contributions of Sanskrit and to a greater or lesser degree other linguistic influences. Thus Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Marathi writers of the present generation enjoy greater freedom in the use of the creative imagination, in the development of a personal style, in the use of devices for implication, nuance, irony, including colloquialism and slang, in a great range of modes, running all the way from the highly classical, to the street language. The 'new' writers in Tamil are only today opening up the possibilities of their language in these directions. In doing so, they feel themselves to be challenging not only the linguistic and stylistic values of the conservative, but the entire range of establishment social and cultural values as well. This generation of writers is able to do this because of the recession of the serious age-old Sanskritic 'threat' to the purity of the Tamil language. Whatever else may be said of the linguistic emotionalism that swept the D.M.K. government to power in Tamil Nadu, it has performed the service of stabilizing the language and eliminating the 'threat' of Sanskritization. The new threat may be fear of experimentation generated by an age-old habit of defense of the language.

Thus, the elements of the current literary movement itself constitute social change. To read a modern Tamil short story or novel, is for the thousands of readers, to obtain insights and perspectives across millennial barriers both within the psyche and in the community and culture.

Here is indeed a case where the medium, a contemporary Tamil prose, is the message, and it is not surprising that emotions are occasionally high on both sides of the tide-rip of social change. In short, we have coexisting at the present time in Tamil Nadu representatives of two different ages, in McLuhan's classification, the scribal era and the typographic era (McLuhan, 1967). This fact is fundamental to an understanding of the critical difficulties facing contemporary writing in Tamil Nadu. Today's young authors, belonging in increasing numbers to the age of typographic man, with its visual and sequential attitude toward history and society and its willingness to transcribe the language as it is heard in the streets and in the families, factories and colleges, and with it to describe realities perceived in all these places, face a quite natural opposition from the adherents of the scribal era. Indeed, the most important fact, in its social, cultural and political consequences, about Tamil Nadu today, may be that the culture is passing from the scribal era, which has been preserved long past its disappearance in many other parts of the world, into the typographic era. The two bands, embattled as they are, represent, in fact, extreme points of view, the scribal adherents holding to positions in regard to the entire culture which appear unreal and even absurd from the point of view of the adherents of the typographic era, and the younger writers, intoxicated by Becket, Berthold Brecht, Thomas Mann, Faulkner, Eliot, attempting experiments with the language and the literature which are not only incomprehensible, but iniquitous from the viewpoint of the scribal adherents. This is not a stable situation, but a gradual progression. An advance is observable from the earliest writers of prose fiction, in the late nineteenth century, to the present time, from a prose which, at most, compromises politely with the scribal point of view, to the present situation in which the modern writer, drawing on much that is earthy and even boysterous in the perennial village culture of Tamil Nadu, attempts to endow Tamil literature with the capacity to interpret fully an observed present-day reality. Here a quotation from McLuhan's *Gutenberg Galaxy* (p. 72) is apposite : ' Any culture that is engaged in translating itself from one radical mode . . . . to another . . . . is bound to be in a creative ferment, as was classical Greece or . . . . Renaissance (Europe).' The ' new literature ' of the younger writers in Tamil Nadu today is such a ferment, springing from just this cause.

The embattled partisans of the scribal mode are indeed right in feeling themselves and their principles fundamentally challenged by the younger writers. Their battle to preserve what must be considered an outmoded manner of viewing the world and of interpreting it is predictably a losing battle. Or is it ? Perhaps not in Tamil Nadu.

In the first place, in this the ultimately conservative society, modes continue to survive side-by-side with succeeding modes, in a compartmentalized existence without even any apparent benefit of interficiality.

In the second place, since the younger writers desire to enter what is elsewhere called the ' twentieth century ', they must expect their public to come from among readers who also feel at home in the norms of the twentieth century. In Tamil Nadu, however, these readers are at present almost exclusively readers of English in preference to Tamil. The issue is therefore in doubt. Hope for a typically Tamil solution springs from the strongly linguistic appeal of the political leaders of Tamil Nadu. Is it not possible that, with the greater number of essentially Tamil-speaking and non-English-knowing families in the urban centres attracted by the wider spread of government and industrial employment, and of Government's use of Tamil in local communications, there may be both an increasing audience for the younger writers and a more thoughtful and widespread appreciation and concern for the ancient values in Tamil language and culture ? It is possible to discern a pair of alternatives : (1) the gradual and painful extinction of living literary Tamil for lack of support by an English-reading élite, or (2) the gradual increase in size of the audience for an adult Tamil literature through the growth in Tamil literacy encouraged by the policies of the present, highly language-conscious State administration. Whichever alternative wins, the present generation of younger writers in Tamil must be viewed as the only active force tending to preserve a Tamil literary language into the modern world.

Who reads their output ? As this paper is limited to fiction, the following four categories may be examined in this order : (a) short stories in magazines, (b) novels in serial form in magazines, (c) short-story collections in book form, and (d) novels in book form. This is proceeding from the lowest to the highest in order of status and in order of monetary expense to the reader. The order also corresponds to the author's approach to his public. A new author may find a magazine to take his short story. After a few successes, and with luck and friendship, he may find a publisher to take a longer story in serial form which may then be called a novel. Only ' name ' writers may obtain publication in book-form ; we shall not count self-financed books. Some of the best writers, such as La Sa Ramamirutham (b. 1916), do not make the best seller lists, but exert a strong stylistic influence.

An informal assessment of relative best-sellers on today's market in Tamil Nadu gave the following results : the six most popular authors of short-stories in magazines are (in order of frequency of publication), (1) Sujatha (b. 1938), (2) Indira Parthasarathy (b. 1930), (3) T. Janakiraman (b. 1921), (4) Jayakanthan (b. 1934), (5) ' P.V.R. ' (Ramakrishnan) (b. 1926), and (6) ' Jegachirpiyan ' (b. 1920). Three of these six are ' new ' writers, willing to write material identifiable as ' modern ' in theme and treatment, stressing social change, daring in language, and frequently experimental, which is to say daring, in subject-matter. The remaining three are sound writers, circumscribed in subject-matter and

in style by considerations of orthodoxy. (That is, the problem raised in the writings of the latter three will be solved so as to leave no disquieting aftertaste.) Any one of the above six will sell thousands of copies of any magazine which prints his name on the cover. All six enjoy huge followings.

The four best sellers in serial form include three of the above, Sujatha, Indira Parthasarathy, and Janakiraman, plus Chandilyan, (b. 1911) a writer of pseudo-historical serials. Two of these four, again, are experimental authors concerned with modern themes, and Janakiraman, though somewhat older, is in sympathy with their efforts.

Material in book form has a singular importance in an economy such as that of India, where the purchase of a complete book by one author is a commitment of an amount of cash which cannot likely be duplicated for several months. Only three authors emerge as sure sellers in the field of short-story collections : Jayakanthan, Akilan (b. 1922) and Na Parthasarathy (b. 1932) who far outsell everyone else in this field.

Novels in book form are a luxury in India. Periodicals are cheaper ; casual reading is rarely purchased in book-form. The purchase of a novel indicates more than a casual interest in the author. In this form, the best-seller by far is Dr. Mu Varadarajan, (b. 1912) Vice-Chancellor of Madurai University, though he is not currently producing. His books are, of course, purchased for study by many students. This does not detract from the fact that he is a top-flight writer whose motivating force may be largely or principally the provision of suitable reading material for the growing literate public in Tamil Nadu. He writes in a classical style, frequently deeply moving, perceptive of human and social values, respectful of the orthodox concept of style and treatment. Second, only to Varadarajan as a best-seller is Jayakanthan. Then, in order, Akilan, Na Parthasarathy, Chandilyan and the D.M.K. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi. Jayakanthan and Karunanidhi definitely belong to the 'new' literature of Tamil. Akilan, Na Parthasarathy and Chandilyan are older writers, but all lively enough to enjoy a wide reading public. Of them all, Chandilyan can command highest prices for his long pseudo-historical fantasies in hard covers.

Of the entire group the only one who is unqualifiedly a 'fulltime writer' is Jegachirpiyan, a short-story writer for the magazines, who hews to the conservative line.

Conspicuously absent from best-seller lists are several, including some I have mentioned, whose works win great critical esteem such as La Sa Ramamirutham, and N. Pichamurti (b. 1900). Among these are some who have not heeded the admonition of Va Raa, that prose should be comprehensible to a rickshaw puller.

Va Raa, in saying this, showed his relish for picturesque and forceful expression. But the absence of some of the best writers from the best-seller lists does indeed raise the problem of the nature of the audience for this literature. As stated above, the English-knowing élite does its reading in English. A middle-class Tamil home will receive one or more mass-circulation periodicals for the leisure reading of the women and children. Aside from these, who might be described as 'dependents' of the élite, this literature reaches the broad mass of employed urban Tamil-speakers. Neither the élite dependents nor the salaried workers are interested in 'difficult' literature. A steward visiting my hotel room, after expressing some interest in my piles of Tamil magazines, took one look at a page of a novel by La Sa Ramamirutham, and said, 'Oh no, sir, that is literature (*ilakkiyam*), I can't read that.' In his voice was a definite tone of respect and awe, and slight embarrassment that one of his class should have been thought to pretend to such literary knowledge.

The audience for contemporary Tamil literature is therefore not as broad as that of, say, the American *Life* magazine. It involves neither the day labourers, the hut-dwellers nor the élites of business, industry, press and education, though it does, currently, involve the governing élite. It is made up of the salaried workers and the dependents of the élite, and is to all intents and purposes restricted to these two groups. The rickshaw-wallahs are not in it.

It hardly needs to be added that a great deal could be done to increase the circulation of current literature even among its present restricted audience. Merchandising of Indian language books is among the least efficient operations in the Indian economy. This would, in fact, appear to be the point at which the problem of increase in literacy could be most efficiently attacked. A recent attempt over the past decade to attack this problem, on the part of a Foundation, failed through lack of appreciation of the economics and politics of the problem, and ignorance of the peculiar set-up in which, for Tamil books, there are neither proper bookstores nor jobbers.

This gives a certain importance to the best-selling magazine authors. One appears on nearly all of the above lists, and as the best-selling current book-form novelist as well: Jayakanthan. While it is not my aim to turn these paragraphs into a apotheosis of any writer, it is worth reminding the reader that this is the same Jayakanthan whom I have quoted as complaining that he had nothing to read in Tamil, and that he was writing to provide reading material for those who needed something in Tamil to read. Obviously he is succeeding in his attempt. He is the most widely read current writer in Tamil, and reaches something like three hundred thousand readers each week through magazine short stories and serials. Jayakanthan began his literary life as a communist, having joined the Party when he was twelve. He has since become dis-

illusioned with the Communist Party but still retains the deep concern for India's poor and unemployed that caused his initial interest in Communism. He communicates his concern through stories that carry the message of his readings in social theory from other languages, and encourages reformulation of values and modernization. He is a thoroughgoing pro, as a writer, and a thoroughgoing pro as a public figure as well. His prefaces often read like intimate letters between himself and his reading public. He is not afraid to appeal to this public through scenes in some stories which are mildly shocking to the rather puritanical South Indian morality.

This leads some to discount his appeal as practically pornographic. With due allowance for the fact that prurience is as lively in Tamil Nadu as anywhere in the world, Jayakanthan simply describes everyday Tamil experience, and his sustained appeal must be explained more correctly by solid interest in his themes which centre around modernization and change and their impact on family, community and individual life. He attacks these themes with optimism, which comes as a relief to a Tamil public long used to sobriety. His motivation is similar to that of Balzac, Zola and Gorki, that is, concern for the lot of the common man. He creates recognizable Tamil types, families, and human backgrounds. The film version of his novel *A Man Like You* won the President's medal for the best picture of 1968.

Obviously, Jayakanthan is a key figure in the changes involved in the rise of a new type of literature. But he is not alone. It will be useful and satisfying to pursue the careers of more than twenty young authors now at work, some as yet publishing little outside of the pages of the ephemeral little reviews. It would be unfair to them to list them incompletely, and beyond the scope of this paper to cover them all even with a brief summary. Though they vary widely in style, subject-matter and technique, they share some traits. In particular, the nostalgia which characterized much early prose fiction has been abandoned, along with its artificiality and its Victorian pretense. Also, the tendency to communal bitterness has almost entirely disappeared. But if, aside from the social change involved in the very existence of this modern writing, and the social changes described in its pages, there is one shared trait which is definitely Tamil, it is a rich vein of fantasy deeply rooted in Tamil lore and in the Tamil language, and coloured with the humour and earthly directness of the Tamil village tradition and the high artistry of Tamil Nadu's millennial literary tradition.

* Names and titles appear in this article in the usual form in which they appear in the English language press and English language Indian publications. These do not follow a wholly consistent system of romanization. If a consistent system were followed, some names would be unrecognizable, at first sight, to many Indian readers.

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The Study of a Tamil Epic:

Several Versions of Silappadikaram *Compared**

BRENDA E. F. BECK

For the Tamil-speaking population of South India, the epic of *Silappadikaram* stands as the single most important story in the traditional literary corpus of the region. The central place this epic enjoys, both in classical studies and in local lore, has long been recognized by scholars. Less well known, however, is the unusual situation that exists with regard to available versions of the text. The verse of the earliest version of the story we have can be dated to the period between about 400 and 600 A.D., probably only a few centuries after some of the events recounted actually occurred.[1] At least ten other more recent palm leaf versions and fourteen learned commentaries are available. Some fifty contemporary retellings have also appeared in print.[2] Furthermore, there are local bards who can sing versions of the epic from memory, and most South Indian drama troupes include this much-loved story in their repertoire.

Existing versions of the *Silappadikaram* story, then, provide a most unusual opportunity to observe contrasts between oral renditions, local printed accounts, and literary scholarly descriptions of the same sequence of events. This essay will attempt such a comparison between four relatively literary versions, two local printed editions, and one oral tape-recorded account by a bard.[3] The essential finding to be detailed in the following pages is that these accounts, which have been drawn from diverse mediums and time periods, differ little in their description of the basic events. Where they do contrast significantly is in the *interpretations* they lay on the hero's actions, and in the larger explanatory or symbolic backdrop they provide for the occurrences described.

In the literature-oriented versions the explanatory structure rests on notions of individual human fate and on actions undertaken in the hero's previous life. In the contemporary renditions, however, the references to events in past lives are minimized. In the local edition in printed verse, a magical *deus-ex-machina* construction is repeatedly utilized. Substituted for a concept of individual destiny is a picture of the heroes as little more than pawns, caught up in a tug-of-war between good and

evil forces in the universe at large.[4] In the oral version, by contrast with both types of literary accounts, ethical obligations to family and relatives take the place of more abstract notions of fate. This bardic account, therefore, can be styled as the most intricate of all in terms of the inter-linkages which exist between characters. This primarily sociological construction of the oral version, makes use of connections described for past lives as well as a succession of events in the present. Other epic length stories collected from singers of the area, furthermore, can be shown to exhibit a similar underlying structure.[5]

Before proceeding further, it is important to give the unfamiliar reader a sketch of the overall action of the Kovalan or *Silappadikaram* story. The events of the core portion of all versions studied are as follows : Kovalan (the hero) is born of merchant parents in a wealthy port city. He is soon married to beautiful Kannaki (the heroine) who is the daughter of similarly placed parents. On the wedding day, or some years thereafter, however, Kovalan is attracted to a beautiful dancing girl named Madhavi and he goes to live with her in another place. He soon throws away his wealth on this girl. Eventually Kannaki despairs and in some versions she sends a message to the hero that she is dying. After a certain amount of indecisiveness Kovalan returns and obtains the heroine's golden anklet which he hopes to sell in the famous inland city of Madurai as a means of acquiring capital to start a new life. Kovalan sets off on his journey and Kannaki accompanies him. The hero agrees but leaves his wife on the edge of Madurai with a shepherdess while he proceeds to the market to find a purchaser. There a goldsmith sees the anklet and recognizes its similarity to one the queen of the kingdom has recently lost to a thief. The goldsmith is implicated in the crime and accuses Kovalan to save his own life. The king believes the goldsmith's story and has Kovalan executed. Kannaki learns of the tragedy, goes to the king with the other half of the anklet pair and demonstrates to the king his tragic error. The heroine is then transformed into a goddess who burns the city and all its wicked inhabitants in her righteous anger. The king dies to purify his kingdom but a few virtuous people such as the family of the shepherdess who looked after Kannaki are saved. The heroine then wanders the countryside in a state of distraction and finally ascends to heaven fourteen days later to join her beloved husband.

The terrific power which the heroine controls, and which she unleashes in the form of a great fire, is central to all three versions of the story. This power, of course, is the fruit of her exceptional chastity, the stored up flames of virtue which ultimately identify her as a goddess and enable her to destroy all the evil-doers. This conversion of sexual abstinence and moral correctness, into power in the form of fire, is a basic theme in Indian mythology which seems to pervade South Indian culture in particular.[6]

What is of special interest here is the fact that chastity is viewed so differently in the various versions of the story under study. In the literary accounts the definition is predominantly internal. Here it is the thought and the intentions of the heroine which count. Thus Kannaki is portrayed as infinitely patient, sweet and loving. She always speaks kindly of her husband, never once nagging or contradicting him even in the depths of her loneliness and despair. In the contemporary bardic version, by contrast, Kannaki is a more fully developed personality with an independent will. She argues repeatedly with her husband, even though she is always in the end persuaded by him. In this version the heroine's chastity lies not in her blameless, subservient character but rather in her physical purity. In the oral epic it is made clear that Kannaki never knew her husband's body and perhaps never even touched him. Instead Kovalan leaves her on the very day of their wedding, drawn by the magic of Madhavi. It is implied that she remains in this state of a pristine newlywed forever and that her special power stems from this condition.

The contemporary versified edition of the story by PukaRenti Pulavar is similar to the oral one in its definition of chastity. Here, however, the physical purity of Kannaki as human is given somewhat less emphasis and her direct magical powers as a goddess somewhat more. This subtle difference in the characterization of Kannaki in the latter account can be more clearly seen when she is contrasted with her rival, Madhavi, the seductive dancing girl. In all of the literary versions, as well as in the oral epic, Kannaki's competitor is a well-intentioned, delightful and attractive mate. In PukaRenti Pulavar's local printed edition, by contrast, Madhavi is portrayed as consciously evil. She thrice attempts to kill Kovalan when he attempts to visit his true wife on receipt of news that she is dying. In this last account, then, the two women are painted as having opposed characters, one black and the other white, whereas in the oral and in the literary versions both women are moral and deserving in their own right.

A few contrasts in the geography and in the narration of the story as provided by the several versions should also be mentioned. As most school children know, the literary *Silappadikaram* is famous among works of Tamil literature for its portrayal of the three great regions or kingdoms of the south (CōRa, PāNTiya, and Cēra) each of which the heroine visits in turn. Furthermore, in learned versions the unity of these three Tamil-speaking areas against the north is an all-important theme. The occasion for confrontation is the expedition to obtain a beautiful stone from the Himalayas for the construction of a shrine for the heroine, Kannaki, after her ascent to heaven as a goddess. In the contemporary, less learned accounts, references to this northern expedition are absent. In the bardic version of the story, by contrast, Kannaki merely takes the

ashes of her deceased husband to the Vaigai, the great river which runs through Madurai, the city where he was killed. Hence the emphasis here is on the sacred qualities of a much more specific locale where the action takes place. And finally, in the more literary of the two local printed accounts one finds references to the greatness of the Tamil language, a clear introduction of a modern political theme.

There are similar contrasts in the narration of the several versions. In the oral account it is Kannaki herself who is said to have told the story to the ancestors of the present bards. In the classical edition, by contrast, the events are recounted by the brother of a Cēra king, who in turn learnt his version from Sāttan, a merchant-poet of Madurai. Thus, in one case the story's historical authenticity is stressed, while in the other its divine origin is asserted. The local printed editions greatly simplify this history by mentioning only the Cēra king, or in the case of the versified account, by ignoring the question of sources altogether.

Given these general contrasts between versions it is now possible to turn to a more detailed consideration of differences. The birth of the heroes, and varying accounts of their previous lives will be discussed first. The literary versions begin with the central actions of the story : a brief description of the families of the hero and heroine and an account of the wedding. Information about the previous life of the main characters is introduced only much later, and always at a specific point where the hero or heroine is troubled. An assistant or friend then tells a story about the past to explain why the suffering is necessary.[7]

In both the oral and the local, printed versions of the story, however, the main characters' former lives are described in detail in a long introduction. In the oral account, which is the most elaborate, the adventures of Vanni and Vannicci (an oil merchant and his wife) are detailed. Vanni has made a vow to light a lamp for Kali with his 1,000th pot of oil, if he manages to sell the other 999 successfully. This he manages to do, but when he goes to light the lamp for the goddess he finds that her temple has been closed and sealed by the local king because his wife has been childless for twelve years. The door to the temple is to be reopened only on pain of death. Vanni, however, has to enter the temple because of his vow to the goddess, and as a result both he and his wife are beheaded in front of the deity at royal command.

This great human sacrifice in front of the goddess brings many important things in its wake. The king's wife is granted a child as a result, the seed of which grows in her womb after being placed there by Kali herself. The child is a girl, but she is born under an inauspicious star and the king is told that his reign will be destroyed if this child remains in the palace for as much as five minutes. Thus her parents, in

great sadness, hurriedly wrap the child and place her in a golden box to be floated down the Vaigai river. The child travels towards the sea and is finally pulled ashore in the port city of Kaveripumpattinam, by a merchant whose wife greatly desired a child.[8] The young girl is named Kannaki by her finders and is raised lovingly in the merchant's home.[9]

Vanni himself is reborn as the son of a second merchant family in the same port city. He is named Kovalan and is compared to the god Sokkan, husband of the goddess Meenakshi (or Kali) of whom Kannaki is a manifestation. Furthermore, it is Kovalan's own mother's brother who pulls the golden box out of the river and who raises the heroine. She is, of course, the rightful or *urimai* cross-cousin for Kovalan to marry and a match between the two is soon arranged.[10] Another suitor also tries for her hand and offers a higher brideprice, but in the end lots are drawn and of course the 'rightful' suitor wins the girl. Madhavi, furthermore, is explicitly said to be the reincarnation of Vanni's wife, Vannicci. Hence she, too, has rights to the hero by virtue of the marriage (and subsequent sacrifice) of their counterparts in a previous life. Kovalan is thus caught in a structural dilemma involving two women from the day of his birth. Both women are correct and deserving from a conjugal perspective. The explanatory mechanism for the hero's later difficulties is present in the form of social obligations from the very start.

In PukaRenti Pulavar's local printed edition of the story the same events are recorded but with certain subtle changes. The sacrifice of Vanni and Vannicci is again described (though in less detail) and this event is again responsible for the birth of Kannaki to the PāNTiya queen. The child is similarly floated down the river and later found by a merchant family in a coastal town. This time, however, there is no particular cross-cousin relationship between Kannaki's foster parents and Kovalan's true one. Kovalan, furthermore, has no direct antecedent in a previous life while his potential mistress (Madhavi) is described simply as the daughter of a famous dancer, Vasanthamalai.[11] Hence, although the overall events are similar in these two versions, the written one lacks the structural subtlety of that old orally by the bard. Kovalan has no previous relationship with Madhavi to justify his infatuation, just as he has no particular 'right' or 'claim' over Kannaki, who is just the daughter of a well-placed family and not a direct cross-cousin. These differences are reinforced later by the evil, potentially destructive character of Madhavi, in the first version, as opposed to her loving, if seductive, manner in the second. In the one Madhavi is a true whore, in the other a singularly appropriate mistress. The situation is similar when it comes to Kovalan. In the local printed account by PukaRenti Pulavar five suitors for Kannaki's hand are described, none of whom have any special kin connection to enforce their claim. The decision is again by lottery,

but this time the reader has the impression that Kovalan wins by luck alone, unaided by his special social position.

One can see the same differences borne out in the final fate of the two women in the various versions under study. In the oral account it is Madhavi who builds the funeral pyre for Kovalan. She then voluntarily jumps into the fire herself, committing *suttee* as a woman in the position of wife (or kept woman) ideally should. In the local printed account by PukaRenti Pulavar, in contrast, Kannaki asks Madhavi to light and tend it so that she (the heroine) can jump in.[12] Madhavi refuses and insists that it is she who should be burned with the hero. Kannaki's rival finally wins the argument, but only by clarifying that it is she who has shared Kovalan's bed for the past twelve years. Hence the contrast between her physical tie to the hero and Kannaki's strictly legal and religious connection is clarified. Kannaki finally lights the pyre and it burns with the same purificatory power as does the fire which later burns the whole kingdom. As previously stated, therefore, the opposition of mistress and sainted wife is much clearer in this local printed version than in the oral account.

Finally, in considering the role of women in relation to their husbands, the queen of Madurai must be mentioned. In the oral version the queen is saved from the conflagration by Kannaki. The overt reason is because Kovalan praises her at the last moment, but by implication Kannaki is bound to save her true mother. In both of the less subtle local printed editions, however, Kannaki kills the queen and all the other relations of the king as well. Only his ministers are saved, as they virtuously refuse to kill Kovalan despite the king's request. (This nasty job was finally carried out by a king's aid.) In the literary versions, the queen dies, but this time she takes her own life by fainting beside the king. He, furthermore, falls dead of his own accord. Hence the rulers die at the hand of fate following a mistake in judgement.

More interesting still is a subtle variation on the oedipal-type theme which permeates the oral version of this story. Here Kannaki is the unknown daughter of the royal couple who rule Madurai. Hence Kovalan is in the structural position of son-in-law. At first the goldsmith attempts to persuade the king that Kovalan is a thief, but when this does not succeed he frames Kovalan and tells the king this man has made love to his queen. It is at this point that the just ruler is overtaken by blind rage and orders Kovalan's death. Hence it is Kovalan's fate to die from the innuendo of an affair with his mother-in-law. The king dies in turn and thus Kovalan helps to fulfill the original prophecy that if Kannaki returned to Madurai the whole kingdom would be destroyed. Kannaki, however, survives as a manifestation of Kāli and later ascends to heaven after saving her mother and purifying the entire city with a great fire.

The ties and social connections between the main characters are clearly more elaborate and more significant in this version than in any of the written accounts.[13]

Leaving the role of the various women in the story to one side, contrasts in the portrayal of the main male, Kovalan, must also be considered. The first point in the story at which Kovalan takes on a distinct personality is when he is confronted with Madhavi. In the classical versions Madhavi does not appear at Kovalan's wedding at all, but is rather summoned some time afterwards to dance for the king. After an accomplished performance Madhavi sends her maid to sell her flower garland on the main street. Whoever purchases the garland for its substantial price, it is agreed, shall become the master and lover of the lovely dancing girl. Kovalan passes on this street where the wealthy merchants of the town gather, and on his own initiative buys the wreath and follows the maid to Madhavi's apartment.

Madhavi appears much earlier in both the oral account and that by PukaRenti Pulavar, however. Here she is described as the main performer at Kovalan's wedding. In the bardic version, to add to the irony, it is one of Kovalan's own mother's brothers who insists that Madhavi dance on this occasion, and who arranges for her appearance. This is the very relative who is traditionally empowered to arrange a man's marriage. Thus the ensuing affair with the dancer is clearly sanctioned from its inception. Furthermore, before Madhavi will dance she announces that she will afterwards throw her flower garland to the crowd and that whoever's neck it lands on will return to her home with her as a husband. Kovalan is an innocent spectator at the performance and when the garland is thrown and it falls on his neck he has taken no initiative in the matter. Furthermore, he finds that he cannot even remove it with a saw. Still he refuses to follow her home, but she offers him betel leaves that have been smeared with a magical cream. After injesting this he is powerless to resist further.

PukaRenti Pulavar's account describes the same scene, but with a few important differences. First, it is Kovalan and not his mother's brother who insists on arranging Madhavi's performance. And secondly, Kovalan hears the commotion after the dance is over and insists on rushing into the crowd to see the garland thrown, even though his mother tries to persuade him to remain in a protected spot with her. And thirdly, Kovalan does not vigorously refuse to go with Madhavi when he discovers that the garland is irremovable, though the ruse of the betel leaf paste is still employed by Madhavi to insure his ensnarement. In all of the literary accounts, therefore, Kovalan is fully responsible for his decision to go to Madhavi. In the local printed versions he is indirectly or partially responsible, while in the oral version the change in

Kovalan's life style is entirely imposed. Here the hero cannot be said to bear any moral responsibility for his actions at all. As is true generally for this bardic account, it is entirely the force of external social circumstances which force Kovalan into his dilemma and ultimately determine his fate.

The same sort of contrasts can be seen at a later point in the story when Kovalan receives a note from Kannaki informing him that she is dying and pleading with him to return home to perform the final rites. In the literary versions Kovalan becomes disenchanted with Madhavi and leaves her of his own accord. He does not need a note to spur him and he never seriously looks back on his decision afterwards. Even on his death bed he does not call out the name of this former mistress. In PukaRenti Pulavar's edition, by contrast, he is touched by the pleas of his wife but finds it difficult to leave his mistress' side. He walks part way to his old home where Kannaki awaits him, but then returns to Madhavi and has to set out a second time. Later when he reaches his wife, he refuses food from her. Later still he is moved to tears by a magical image of Madhavi which Kannaki has set in his path. And at the end, during the few minutes Kannaki is able to keep him from death he still cries for Madhavi, thinking only of her. Clearly in this version, once Kovalan has let himself slip into the magical snare which Madhavi weaves he is never able to escape. The oral version is similar, but here his final request is not for Madhavi's companionship in the next life, but simply for her to cremate him with the appropriate rites. Once again, therefore, one can observe a subtle shift in the oral version towards an emphasis on the rightful relations between the actors and away from personal anguish and individual decision-making.

It is also of interest to consider the roles of the gods as they emerge in these several accounts. First of all there are contrasts in the invocations which appear at the beginning of each work. In the oral version the most beloved of all the famous South Indian deities, Murugan is praised at some length. This introduction, inviting Murugan to inspire the singer and enjoy the recitation, is followed by a brief song dedicated to Vinayakar. Vinayakar is Murugan's elder brother (they are both sons of Siva) and it is traditional to call upon him at the beginning of every important undertaking.

In PukaRenti Pulavar's printed edition the same two deities are praised, but in the reverse order. Vinayakar, the more formalistic, senior brother is given precedence. Furthermore, two other famous Hindu deities are added to the introductory verses, Vishnu and Saraswati. The latter, as the goddess of learning, is traditionally invoked by poets and scholars in place of her husband, Brahma. Thus indirectly all three members of the great Hindu triad (Siva, Vishnu and Brahma) are praised.

The influence of the larger religious structure and of the great literary tradition is thus apparent in the opening lines of this interesting local printed account. The other local printed version studied, that by R. Periyaswami, does not invoke the gods at all, but does mention Tamil, a kind of contemporary political substitute.

The classical text provides a third variation. Here the poet begins with the praise of a natural triad : the Moon, the Sun, and the Clouds. He has been careful, furthermore, to surround the heating member of the trio (the Sun) by two cooling ones (the Moon and the Clouds) as is appropriate in South Indian ritual tradition. Other literary versions substitute the river Kaveri for the clouds but the principle suggested is maintained. Finally, after such a trio is invoked, the great city of Puhar where the action of the story is to begin is also given due praise. Hence there is an emphasis on the great celestial elements in the literary versions and on locally beloved and very human gods in the oral bardic account. The local printed versions again fall in between, one praising the more familiar divine triad and the other linking the telling of the story to a popular political theme.

The endings of the various versions studied can be similarly compared. In the oral account a long song in praise of Rama concludes the story. He is, in a sense, the popular embodiment of all the important virtues enjoined on man. In the literary versions, by contrast, the story ends with a discourse on right behaviour delivered by the author. The local printed editions, by contrast, make no reference at all to the question of what the reader should learn from the account. The whole is recommended simply as a ' bottomless pit of gold '. Hence, the oral and the literary versions are both concerned with instructing the audience, using the story as a means of conveying ethical principles, while the locally published accounts concretize the story and attempt only a faithful recount of the action.

The role played by the gods is similarly different in these several versions of the *Silappadikaram* story. Take the warnings which the main characters are given about the probable fruits of specific actions as an example. In the oral account it is the goddess Meenakshi who directly warns Kovalan not to proceed with his plan to sell his wife's anklet in Madurai. In the local printed account by PukaRenti Pulavar, however, it is Vinayakar, and not the goddess herself who undertakes to warn the couple. And furthermore, Vinayakar only warns Kannaki, and then it is the latter's task to convey these misgivings to her husband. In the literary version, by contrast, Kovalan must listen to his friends' more philosophical thoughts, none of which are really intended to dissuade the hero from proceeding as planned.

Finally, there are the differences in the portrayal of Kannaki's god-like qualities in the three versions. For the oral bard she has special

abilities throughout the story. Kovalan is often able to obtain magical aid just by thinking of her. However, when Kannaki herself wishes for superhuman transformative powers she first prays to a combination of gods. When it is a wish for something relatively unpleasant, such as turning a person into stone, she turns to Meenakshi. When it is a matter of restoring humans to their common, everyday form, or of asking for boons such as a drink of pure water, however, she turns to Vishnu with her prayers. Hence the local goddess Meenakshi (a form of Kāli) is requested to assist in moments of terror and destruction while Vishnu, the universalistic male, is relied upon for restorative, life-giving effects. Kannaki herself does not admit to the possession of these powers, graciously deferring to the gods. Not until she again wears the anklet which her husband tried to sell is she explicitly transformed into Kāli herself.

In PukaRenti Pulavar's printed verse account, Kannaki is also described as obtaining magical wishes, but here she does so of her own accord, without first praying to the gods. The result is a less human and more magical, almost mechanical, portrayal of her powers. Furthermore, she is later converted into Kāli merely by holding the returned anklet in her hand. In the literary editions, on the other hand, Kannaki performs no magical deeds at all. Though exceptionally chaste and virtuous, she is fully human throughout most of the story. Even after her climatic transformation she is described simply equal in powers to Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Kāli. Never does she explicitly become a manifestation of one of them. The point of her full transformation is not when she takes up the anklet, but rather when she tears off her left breast to create a great fire with which to burn the city.[14] Hence in all of the contemporary versions, the magic of the anklet is very important. In the literary account, however, the breast of Kannaki can be said to contain an equal if not greater power. In the one case the stress is laid on an external catalyst for the heroine's transformation, in the other the symbolism suggests a truly internal source of fire.

One might similarly ask about the use of other kinds of symbolism in the story besides the anklet and the breast. There are several contrasts of this sort to be noted. For example, the purificatory powers of water are important in all three types of account but are differently expressed in each. In the oral version of the story Kovalan obtains water on the long, dry road to Madurai simply by thinking of the virtuous Kannaki. Similarly at a later point in the story the shepherdess who guards the heroine while Kovalan goes into Madurai fills her pots with milk, curd, and buttermilk by a similar means.

In PukaRenti Pulavar's account, however, these magical happenings become more complex and are resorted to more frequently. Here too

Kannaki has power over water and food. But in this version she also transforms mud into eatables as well as having to save Kovalan several times from the danger of drowning. In the literary versions, by contrast, there are no magical complications at all. The stress here is on a much more refined praise of the great Ganges, Kaveri and Vaigai rivers, and on their role as consorts of the gods. In these more philosophical accounts the general form of the comparison between goddess, heroine, water and well-being is selected for emphasis.

Furthermore, in several versions of the story a repeated poetic association is made between a cobra's head and the heroine's strength or beauty.[15] In the bardic and the popular versified account this association is introduced in the form of a cobra who holds his extended hood over the golden box bearing the young Kannaki as she floats downriver after banishment from the palace. The cobra, it is said by the authors of these accounts, exemplifies her beauty and also serves to protect her.[16] In several of the literary versions, however, the use of the cobra image is more intimate. As was customary among Sangam poets, one of the epithets repeatedly used to describe the heroine states that she has a pubis that resembles a cobra's hood. Note the preference for describing the heroine's internal qualities in these learned accounts, as opposed to the external, contextual symbolism of the local and bardic works.

In addition to the specific symbolic metaphors employed by the authors, one may note the way such poetic devices are used in the development of the story. The recounting of a dream to foreshadow a coming event is a good example. This classical literary device is put to full use in the more learned versions of the epic. In these accounts both the heroine and the hero have ominous dreamlike visions. In each case, furthermore, this experience just precedes the hero's initiation of one of the major actions of the tragic sequence. There is a masterful subtlety in using dreams in this double way, to portend the future and to express the sense of guilt and responsibility for the succession of events which the main characters experience.

In the oral version of the story no dreams are described. Here one can only discuss an external warning system, signs foretelling the future being provided by the gods. Again there is a contrast with the tendency towards internal explanation, and the stress on the ultimate ethical responsibility of individuals provided by more literary accounts. Once more, the local printed editions strike a middle ground. In PukaRenti Pulavar's version only one dream is described. This dream is experienced by Kannaki and it occurs after her husband has already been executed. Thus it merely prepares her for the coming announcement of the same fact by a shepherdess who has just returned from the town.[17] Hence here is an imitation of a traditional literary device without the impli-

cations for moral responsibility which classical writers provide. In this local printed account, the heroine is helpless to prevent the tragedy; it has already occurred.

The situation is similar, in a sense, if one compares the scenes just preceding Kovalan's execution. In the oral account Kovalan fully ignores three separate omens of disaster : the sight of a single Brahman, of a single artisan, and of a black cat. Later he also passes five successive trials intended to demonstrate his innocence to the king. The five tests of his character consist of walking a certain distance holding melted wax in his hands, placing his hand in a pot of melted ghee, placing his hand in a pot containing a live cobra, remaining a certain length of time in a room with a tiger, and lying down in a pit and allowing an elephant to step over him. Each of these he completes honorably, but the king orders him executed anyway. In PukaRenti Pulavar's versified account of the story the events leading to Kovalan's death are similar in type but different in terms of emphasis. Instead of three omens there are nine, and in place of five trials there are only three.[18] This author places more stress on formalistic warnings and less on Kovalan's human predicament and on his efforts to prove his innocence.

In the literary versions, by contrast to both of the above, there are no trials at all, and only one omen (a humped bull) is described. Here the weight is shifted to three lectures on the nature of fate provided by the hero's friends. Once more then, the literary version progresses by the development of abstract precepts, illustrated by stories of past ages. The oral version, on the contrary, places its emphasis on the concrete efforts of the hero to escape his predicament and on the injustice of the king's decision which is imposed despite these actions. The local printed accounts are closer to the oral than to the classical in this matter, but with a greatly increased emphasis on magical portents and less on character-determined action.

To sum up these various contrasts between versions which have been pointed out in the preceding paragraphs, it may be helpful to recall the central importance of the anklet in every case, along with a few critical differences in how this central imagery is developed.[19] In the oral version we are told that Kannaki was born with invisible anklets on her feet which no key can unlock. Furthermore, these circlets have never been touched by a goldsmith. The emphasis here is thus on the anklets as a poetic symbol of Kannaki's purity. The description of these anklets provided in the local printed account by PukaRenti Pulavar is similar except that mention of their invisibility is omitted. The details about having no key and having never seen a goldsmith are also not provided. The oral bard further says that Kannaki only managed to remove her anklet and give it to her husband with the help of prayers to the goddess

Meenakshi. In the local account mentioned above, however, Kannaki removes the circlets without divine assistance. When she does so, furthermore, these decorative objects cry out in pain. In the bardic account the anklets thus serve primarily as a metaphor reflecting on the wearer's own constancy, while in PukaRenti Pulavar's printed verse version, they have a personality of their own. In the latter the purity of the heroine is given a physical form. Instead of the goddess helping Kannaki, the anklets themselves enter the action and scold her. The two treatments express well the emphasis on the internal qualities of the heroine in the first version and on the magical separability of pure from impure, of powerful from vulnerable, in the second.

In the literary version there are still further differences in the description of the two anklets. None of these learned accounts suggest that Kannaki was born with her anklets on. Indeed, in these versions the circlets are not even mentioned until about a third of the way through the story. Although they are ultimately attributed with the power to ' burn a city ' and ' destroy a king ' the heroine's anklets clearly compete with her torn breast for final prominence. While these objects serve as the main symbol of Kannaki's power in the oral and local, printed versions, the circlets are only one of many metaphors in the poetic design developed in the more literary accounts. In the latter they are only a device which sets the stage for a display of inner anguish. At the hands of the bard and local poet, however, they are key to the tragedy. When unlocked they bring the heroes and a whole kingdom to destruction.[20]

In conclusion, where the author chooses a very high prose style, appropriate to truly lettered men, then one may expect a concomitant stress on literary religious themes. The heroes will be individually responsible for their actions and the central symbolic usages will be directed towards illumining their inner thoughts and character. There will also be a tendency to utilize the commentary of religious devotees, and to use renouncers, seers and dreams to connect the present with both past and future.

When oral song-prose becomes the medium on the other hand, the social context is likely to become a prominent determinent of the heroes' actions. Here there will be less stress on individual responsibility and more on the structure of human relationships as fixed by the gods. The symbolic elements in the story in this case are more likely to serve as metaphorical statements of general socio-religious principles (purity, chastity, power, etc.) than as similes for individual character. Ethical commentaries, furthermore, will take the form of concrete examples of action rather than of abstract and philosophical precepts.

Local attempts by literate, but classically unschooled authors to set down such stories in local, printed editions, however, are likely to subtly

develop the story in a third direction. Here the composer's concern to display a knowledge of formal literary effects may produce a cramped verse style. A stress on the details of the heroes' movements can also lead to an excessive emphasis on magical effects and to a *deus ex machina* type of explanatory structure. Furthermore, the rococo-like exuberance of metaphor and of action detail is likely to detract from any presentation of the larger ethical issues or of social commentary.

In all versions of the story the power that Kannaki wields by virtue of her extraordinary constancy is given a central importance. This inner force is converted into a great fire when she becomes angered and distraught. Directed by her it is then used to destroy evil-doers and to regenerate mankind. Hence in each account a delicate balance achieved between the lead female as virtuous and submissive on the one hand and as all-powerful or frightening on the other.

In the literary versions the heroine's virtue rests on an inner purity and it is her example which in the end sets the tone for the whole kingdom and for the worship of Kannaki by its worthy monarch. The literary story is closer to local printed versions in this respect than to the oral one. Both stress Kannaki's divine powers and conclude with a description of her worship by the multitudes. At the same time the local published accounts can be seen to diverge from these learned ones because of their reliance on the magical rather than the ethical qualities of the heroine. The oral version resembles these local printed editions in its stress on the physical basis of chastity. The bard, and the local poet who has committed his knowledge to written verse, both view man's fate as largely determined by external circumstance.

The bardic interpretation lies closer to the literary however, than it does to these local printed editions when the importance of past lives or the concern of the story-teller to instruct his audience on ethical issues are considered. One can even view the bardic version as exceeding the literary ones in its enthusiasm for describing the fiery powers of a chaste woman. It is the oral poet who lays the most stress of all on Kannaki's frightful power to destroy and to purify the PāNTiya kingdom. Indeed this version ends with a description of the funeral pyre which she lights for her husband and not with an account of her worship as a goddess many years later. Hence, in a sense, the three types of accounts describe three sides of a nearly equilateral triangle, each type bearing closer relations to one of the other types in some respects than to the other.

The student of Indian literature must become resigned to the fact that he will never know in detail how written and oral developments of various stories have influenced and counter-influenced each other. It seems reasonable for him to concentrate, therefore, on the evident corre-

lations to be found between various prose styles, story structures and types of character portrayal. Given such an emphasis it should be possible to suggest certain general features which distinguish bardic, local and learned versions of traditional Indian stories such as the one just described. The differences suggested here can now be tested against a larger corpus of similar materials for verification.[21]

Where historical information fails, in the study of interplay between a great literature and a peasant culture, there is wide scope for this kind of interpretation which makes use of context rather than genesis and of form rather than of specific events in the study of the traditional epic or folk story.

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[1] For the dating of the events themselves see Nainar Subrahmanian, *Sangam Polity* (Asia Publishing House, London, 1966), pp. 26-28 and V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar (ed.), *The Silappadikaram* (Madras, Humphrey Milford, 1939), pp.8-10 and 449-59. For the dating of the extant text see Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India* (Madras, Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 85 and 117.

[2] Ramachandra Dikshitar, ibid., pp. 14-15 and 70-73 and my own perusal of contemporary books in print.

[3] A. *Literary Editions*

(*a*) U. V. Swaminathaiyar (ed.), *Silappadikaram* (Madras, V. N. Jubilce Press, 1892), translated by V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, (Madras, Humphrey Milford, 1939) and by Alain Danielou, (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965).

(*b*) N. M. Venkatacami Natar, *Silappadikaram*, (Madras, Saiva Siddhanta Works, 1968).

(*c*) Pulavur Aracu, *Silappadikaram*, (Madras, Saiva Siddhanta Works, 1961).

(*d*) Kaviyaracu Venkatacalam Pillai, *Silappadikaram Grama*, (Madras, Saiva Siddhanta Works, 1965).

B. *Local Printed Accounts*

(*a*) R. Periyaswami, *Silambu Chelvan*, (Madras, no publisher cited, 1965).

(*b*) PukaRenti Pulavar, *Kovalan Story*, (Madras, Sri Makal Company, no date), (in verse).

C. *Oral Versions*

(*a*) E. C. Ramacami Navitan, *Kovalan Story*, tape-recorded in Olappālayam, Via Kangayam, Coimbatore District, July 26-28, 1966 (about eight hours singing time).

[4] *Silambu Chelvan* is the more 'classically' oriented of the two versions in the popular category. The other account written by PukaRenti Pulavar, places considerably more emphasis on magical events. It is the only version I surveyed which suggests that Madhavi (Kovalan's mistress) was an evil woman at heart.

[5] I am currently working on a book on the folklore of the Koṅku region which is to take up this question at length.

[6] I have found it repeated in many of the other stories I have collected. The removal of the anklet, the central symbol of this particular epic, would seem to prepare the way for this power's release.

[7] For example it is learnt that Kovalan was once the trusted confidant of a king who one day unjustly accused a merchant of being a spy and later witnessed him put to death.

[8] Kaveripoompattinam is another name for Puhar, the name of the port city in the classical accounts. However, Kaveripoompattinam is supposed to be located at the mouth of the Kaveri and not of the Vaigai river. This is a slight anomaly which is left unexplained by the bard.

[9] This sequence of events is also found in popular accounts of the story in Ceylon. Which direction the borrowing has taken is not known. See Dikshitar's translation of *Silappadikaram, op. cit.*, p. 31.

[10] The mother's brother's daughter is the traditional, ritually sanctioned marriage for the majority of castes in South India.

[11] She is also called the daughter of Vasanthamalai in the oral account. In the literary versions, by contrast, Vasanthamalai is merely Madhavi's trusted attendant.

[12] There is a vague parallel here with the literary versions, where Kannaki contemplates suicide as she enters the city of Madurai after hearing of her husband's death.

[13] This version of the story provides fresh support for A. K. Ramanujan's suggestion that Indian authors have a genius for inverting the standard European oedipal pattern in their works. Specifically Ramanujan points to the repeated description of fathers who kill their sons in order to keep their wife to themselves. The variant of a king killing his son-in-law for this same reason (particularly where he has no natural sons to compete) is only barely different. Ramanujan's paper, 'The Indian Oedipus', was delivered at the Association for Asian Studies meetings in San Francisco, April 3, 1970.

[14] In the iconographic tradition Kāli is always portrayed with weapons of destruction in her left hands and symbols of beneficence in her right. Furthermore the left side of her body is said to be blue and the right side golden. Hence it is most appropriate to portray this fire of destruction as springing from her left breast.

[15] Exceptions are R. Periaswami's *Silambu Chelvan* and K. V. Pillai's *Silappadikaram Drama*. These do not use the cobra image at all.

[16] This is a very common image used in many other folk stories as well.

[17] The other popular version, closer to the classical pattern, also describes only one dream. But this time it is Kovalan's and it occurs just before he makes his entry into Madurai.

[18] The existence of five trials is mentioned in passing, but only three are described.

[19] The classical name of the story, *Silappadikaram*, strictly translatable as 'The Happening Concerning an Anklet' also points to the importance of this symbolic theme. Both *PukaRenti Pulavar* and the oral bard, however, name the story after its male hero, Kovalan. By doing this they tend to de-emphasize the central importance of the heroine in the events described.

[20] The anklets are made of the purest gold and jems. More importantly, however, they encircle the leg or foot. To tie or surround by a cord, both at the neck, and at the wrists, has a special protective significance in South Indian ritual tradition. Anklets it would seem, have the same general properties. They may ward off evil influences and help a woman to store up the powers to be obtained from constancy and perfect chastity.

[21] I presently have a large collection of such material in my possession which I hope to analyze along these lines.

An Introduction to the Study of Tolkāppiyam

V. SP. MANICKAM

Tolkāppiyam, the earliest work now extant in Tamil, is generally assigned to about the third century B.C. It deserves a comparative and comprehensive study at the international level of research by eminent scholars here and abroad, in view of its treatment of universal themes like love and war, government and society, married life and renunciation, language and literature, and culture and civilisation of a people living in the southern part of India whose hoary past has been accepted by historians. A Tamil work *Puṟapporuḷ Veṇpāmālai* embalms the oral tradition that the heroic Tamil race was born on the peaks of mountains when the rest of the land was still immersed in the ocean waters. It is to be observed that Tamil alone is reputed as the international Indian language spoken in different Asian countries with the status of one of the state languages. The time is also now ripe for starting international pursuit of research study of *Tolkāppiyam* since we have already held three World Tamil Conferences and the Government of Tamil Nadu with the aid of the UNESCO has founded the International Institute of Tamil Studies.

Tolkāppiyam from its birth has greatly influenced Tamil literature and grammar throughout the ages. It has to its credit many commentaries written in different periods by erudite scholars well-versed also in Sanskrit. But for these commentaries, survival of this old work against the odd vissicitudes which caused the loss of hundreds of works in the middle ages would be doubtful. Therefore any study of *Tolkāppiyam* cannot but include the glosses thereon. It is gratifying to note that *Tolkāppiyam* which was unfortunately a sealed book for Western Orientalists for centuries is now rapidly gaining ground at least in the field of linguistics.

Researchers on *Tolkāppiyam* must, at the outset, give up the wrong notion hitherto held that it is a grammatical treatise and that its main concern is only the Tamil language and its various phenomena such as phonemes and phonology, morphemes and morphology, and syntax. No doubt it is a work on grammar. But grammar of what sort? Nowadays the word ‘grammar’ has often a very restrictive sense and sometimes a degrading sense too. One who enters into the portals of *Tolkāppiyam* must realise the varied and vast subjects treated in it directly and indirectly. Only this realisation will throw new light and open new vistas for the furtherance of research about this work.

Tolkāppiyam in its first two parts systematically brings out the phonetic, phonemic, morphemic and syntactical nature of the Tamil language. But more than that, even these two parts abound in interesting and pointed references to the customs and manners of the Tamil people and the Tamil Nadu. Proper names, names of measures, names of fauna and flora etc. are profuse in the aphorisms. Social impact has pervaded the first two parts also. No language can be divorced from society as its very existence depends upon the social intercourse of the community. Linguists are expected to understand this mode of treatment adopted by Tolkāppiyar even in the field of language. So far, no attempt has been made to discover the unique methods employed by this author in writing his magnum opus. We are content with simply applying modern methods to the study of this ancient work while analysing the production of articulatory sounds. It is customary for writers on linguistics to arrange phonemes from the labials to the velars. *Tolkāppiyam* in the third chapter *Piṛappiyal* enumerates consonants beginning from the '*k*' stop which is produced by the complete closure of the soft palate. This new and natural order of sounds is worth noting.

The third part of the *Tolkāppiyam* is entitled *Poruḷathikāram*. The word '*poruḷ*' has several meanings. The appropriate meaning in this connection will be subject matter or theme of compositions. In *Akam* chapters, principles evolved from love literature technically called *Akam* are minutely described. What scholars have missed is to bring out into prominence the universal and independent approach of Tolkāppiyar to sexual love with no historical colour. The anonymity of the characters in the drama of *Akam* is an unassailable evidence to prove its universal outlook. The unqualified declaration that, not withstanding their social and economic status, all should receive equal treatment in *Akam* literature in the matter of purity of love is noteworthy.

The *Puṛam* chapter has not been taken up so far for serious consideration. I accept that the art of war portrayed in *Tolkāppiyam* is a thing of the remote past. But this portrayal is only secondary. The purport of *Puṛam* is not to describe the actual activities going on in the war front but to unearth and reveal the energetic human tendencies leading one always to entertain mistrust, provocation and hostility. According to Tolkappiyar's analysis, power struggle for the establishment of one's supremacy over others by all means and at all costs is the eternal motive for waging war. This mentality is termed as *tumpai*. It should be remembered that importance is not given in *Tolkāppiyam* to wars undertaken to annex the land of belligerent states and thus enlarge one's own domain.

In *Veṭchi* theme of *Puṛam* chapter, protection to civilian people and innocent livestock is emphasised as the first duty of the aggressor before resorting to actual fighting. In *Kāñchi* theme, seeds for religion and

spiritualism are sown by pointing out the horrors of war, mass annihilation of human lives and devastation of individual and national properties and by exhorting some people to do service to the community at large. In *vākai* theme, the competitive spirit in all walks of life, like education, administration, business, profession, sports and pastimes is activated by rousing one's eagerness to win fame, reward and recognition before the public. It will be clearly seen from the *cūttirams* of *Vākaittiṇai* that *Puṟam* subjects are varied and related to all strata of society. The last theme '*pāṭāṉ*' asserts that *Puṟam* division does not confine its treatment to political conflicts and war campaigns but holds under its purview treatment of social and national services an individual could render according to one's capacity. The readers will be convinced now that a work treating of such subjects, as referred to above, should not be called a mere grammar book in the ordinary sense of the word.

In the third part there is a chapter *Ceyyuḷiyal* wherein lies an ocean of information about Tamil culture and civilisation and Tamil literature. This is the largest and greatest among the 27 chapters in *Tolkāppiyam* but it is also the least studied one. Scholars have turned a blind eye to this section as its study requires sufficient equipment in several disciplines. In order to draw the attention of the pandits to this valuable but untraversed section, a lover of *Tolkāppiyam* announced an award of one thousand rupees for those who were able to identify the correct readings of two *cūttirams* relating to alliterations and rhymes.

What is meant by *Ceyyuḷ*? *Tolkāppiyam*, as the Prologue puts it, has treated all themes on two fundamental grounds—Usage (*vaḻakku*) and composition (*ceyyuḷ*). By usage we mean the practice which was in vogue at the time of the author. Composition means any form composed with literary merit with a view to preserve something. It need not necessarily be in writing ; it may be in speech also, as is evident from the inclusion of proverb as one of the compositions in *Tolkāppiyam*. Be it in writing or in oral form, anything concise and poetical and couched in the choicest words is a composition, *cey* means to cultivate. Land reclaimed for ploughing is called *cey* in Tamil. In Chapter *Vēṟṟumai Iyal* under Part II, a composition is beautifully defined as '*terintu moḻic ceyti*'.

This chapter has given expression to the existence in olden times of seven kinds of composition in poetry or in prose or in ordinary speech. It mentions 34 constituents making up compositions. To study each of these will involve a laborious but fruitful research. As it needs a detailed study of the three commentaries now available on this section and a comparative study of the later works on prosody like *Yāpparuṅkalam* together with a flood of literature, this chapter alone will claim life-long devotion from an ardent student.

I should like to conclude that vastness of subjects, orderly and analytical treatment, social background, universal outlook, principles of composition, relation between forms and contents, are some of the guidelines to be borne in mind while framing schemes for the study of *Tolkāppiyam*.

Tolkāppiyam

KAMIL ZVELEBIL

Introductory Note

Since, according to Nakkīrar's commentary on Iraiyaṉār's *Akapporuḷ*, a preface (*pāyiram*) is indispensable for a book ' like the sun and the moon which are the lamps of the sky ', this English version of the *Tolkāppiyam* is, too, introduced by a very brief preface.

With the immense growth and spread of Tamil and Dravidian studies within the last decade, the *Tolkāppiyam* has become one of the truly indispensable, basic texts for such studies. It is being quoted (and misquoted), used (and misused) by many. Unfortunately, there does not exist any single modern, critical, unbiased and dependable translation of this extremely useful and interesting book into English (or any other Western tongue). It is my firm conviction that unless the *Tolkāppiyam* is made available, in a simple, intelligible, and objective English version, to Western Tamil and Dravidian scholars, Tamil studies, and Dravidian studies, will be seriously handicapped.

The *Tolkāppiyam* has been translated, partly or fully, into English before, with a strong pro-Sanskritic, and an equally strong anti-Sanskritic, bias. The translators have either been too much under the spell of the commentators, or they were very much opposed to the commentators, rather as a matter of principle, than on the merit of such opposition. I would call—begging the pardon of the readers—the translation which is presented here, a ' no-nonsense ' translation. It is a translation of the original underlying text (of the *nūṟpās*) only, without the commentaries ; the approach to the text was from within the text itself. There are as few notes as possible. Any bias was scrupulously avoided (which was not so difficult for the translator whose sole allegiance is to the objectivity of international scholarship).

The *Tolkāppiyam*, in spite of the fact that it is, apart from a few interpolations and later additions, a very ancient text is also a very modern book. That is why the translation given here is in simple, contemporary language, though as close to the original as possible.

Ciṟappuppāyiram

Specific Preface

In the beautiful world
which speaks Tamil
between
Northern Vēṅkaṭam and Southern Kumari
he explored
the sounds, the words, and the things,
and he has fathomed
both the common and the literary speech,
and enquired into ancient books
which were in vogue in the land of chaste Tamil,
and he designed a perfect plan
gathering knowledge as of spotless nature :
he, the ascetic
renowned in ample fame,
who revealed his name as Tolkāppiyaṉ
versed in *aintiram*,
surrounded by surging waves ;
and he has unfolded the system and the order
which starts with sounds,
in a clear and unbewildering course ;
and he dispelled the doubts
of the Teacher of Ataṅkōṭu
ripe in the wisdom of the Four Vedas,
whose tongue resounded with virtue ;
in the assembly of the Pāṇṭiyaṉ,
glorious and land-bestowing.

Paṉampāraṉār

NOTE

Not everything is clear about this 'Specific Preface' (*ciṟappuppāyiram*) to the book, and it would be useless to pretend otherwise (so, e.g., the allusion to the Teacher of Ataṅkōṭu). Various items may be variously interpreted (e.g. the term *nāṉmaṟai*, 'the Four Vedas'). But these are all matters for a lengthy discussion elsewhere. What should be noted here are the following facts :

(1) The author of the Specific Preface has clearly indicated the *geographical extension* of Tamil (between Northern Vēṅkaṭam and Southern Kumari, i.e. roughly the same as today) ;
(2) he has given the name of the language described in the book as Tamil (*tamiḻ*) ;
(3) he has mentioned the two principal *styles* of the language, i.e. common usage (*vaḻakku*), obviously the informal, spoken, colloquial style, and *ceyyuḷ*, lit. composition, poetry, language of poetry, i.e. the formal, written, literary style ;
(4) he has mentioned the basis of Tolkāppiyaṉār's description and the former authorities as belonging to *centamiḻ .... nilam*, i.e. the land of chaste, 'straight' Tamil ;
(5) he has mentioned the fact that Tolkāppiyaṉ (whoever he—or they—might have been) was well-versed in some (grammatical system called) *aintiram*, which is most probably connected with the Sanskrit *aindra*— ;
(6) he has mentioned the basic division of expository literature into Phonology (*eḻuttu*) or 'sounds', Grammar (*col*) or 'words' and Meaning (*poruḷ*) or 'things'.

Eḻuttatikāram

Phonology

Chapter I : *Basic rules of the book*

1. Those which are termed the *eḻuttu*[1] are said to be
thirty in number
beginning with *a*
[and] ending with *ṉ*
except the three the occurrence of which
depends upon others.

2. They [the three] are
the over-short *i*, the over-short *u*,
and the three dots
called *āytam*, similar to a *eḻuttu* (' letter ').

3. Among them,
the five sounds
a, *i*, *u*, *e*, *o*
have each one measure[2]
[and] are called short sounds.[3]

4. The seven sounds
ā, *ī*, *ū*, *ē*, *ai*, ō, *au*
have two measures each
[and] are called long sounds.[4]

5. One [single] sound has never three measures.

6. Learned men[5] say that, if lengthening[6] is needed,
the [sound] of that measure should be produced and added.

7. According to the view of those who have
understood accurately,
one *māttirai*[7] is the time taken by a wink of the eyes[8]
[or] a snap of the fingers.[9]

8. The twelve phonemes ending with *au*
are called vowels.[10]

9. The eighteen phonemes ending with *ṉ*
are called consonants.[11]

10. The nature of vowels is not altered
even when pronounced with consonants.

11. The measure of a consonant is said
to be half [a *māttirai* ?].

12. The other three also remain
of that nature.[12]

13. The sound *m* has [its] half measure shortened
when pronounced with [another consonant].
Considered carefully, it is rare.

14. [Its] shape[13] will be a dot, obtaining within.

15. The nature of the consonant
is to be provided with a dot.[14]

16. *e* and *o* are also of the same nature.[15]

17. All consonant-shapes without dots
represent consonant-sounds with *a*
and change their forms when joined by other vowels.
These are the two ways to vocalize [consonants].

18. Vowels occur after consonants.

19. *k*, *c*, *ṭ*, *t*, *p*, *r* are called ' hard ' sounds.[16]

20. *ṅ*, *ñ*, *ṇ*, *n*, *m*, *ṉ* are called ' soft ' sounds.[17]

21. *y*, *r*, *l*, *v*, *ḻ*, *ḷ* are called ' medial ' sounds.[18]

22. Those thrice six [consonants] when carefully examined
[as to their] proper place [in which they are] used
[fall into two divisions]—*meymmayaṅku* [and] *uṭaṉilai*.[19]

23. The single consonants[20] *ṭ*, *ṟ*, *l*, *ḷ*
are properly followed by the three sounds *k*, *c*, *p*.[21]

24. Among those,
ḻ [and] *ḷ* can also be followed by *y* [and] *v*.[22]

25. The single consonants *ṅ*, *ñ*, *ṇ*, *n*, *m*, *ṉ*
are followed by their respective stops.[23]

26. Among those,
ṉ [and] ṉ are also properly followed
by the seven [sounds] *k*, *c*, *ñ*, *p*, *m*, *y* [and] *v*.[24]

27. The single consonants *ñ*, *n*, *m*, *v*
may indeed be followed by the consonant *y*.[25]

28. After the single consonant *m*, *v* also appears.[26]

29. After the single consonants *y*, *r*, *ḻ*,
the initial sounds and *ṅ* also appear.[27]

30. When pointing out the situation of the consonants,
all [consonant] sounds except *r* [and] *ḻ*
can be followed by themselves.[28]

31. *a*, *i*, *u*, these three are demonstratives.[29]

32. *ā*, *ē*, ō, those three are interrogatives.[30]

33. Scholars say that vowels and consonants
have their quantity increased [and such
lengthening is described] in books on
vocal and instrumental music.

CHAPTER II : *Rules [on the occurrence of phonemes in] words*

34. The overshort *i* will stand before the component *yā*
after *m*, occurring in that position with
the expletive word used in inviting attention.[31]

35. The shortening [of *i*] is also proper between
[two words] in junction. It will be discussed
and explained later.

36. The overshort *u* will appear following an occlusive
which occurs after long vowel, and in the final
position of a *toṭarmoḻi*.[32]

37. There is also place for the shortening [of *u*]
in word combination ; it will be properly explained
in the section on conjunction.[33]

38. The *āytam* [symbolized by] dot[s] is preceded
by short vowel and followed by a plosive combined
with the vowel.[34]

39. [Its] phonetic realization occurs even in the final position [of the first member of a word combination].[35]

40. Though an *āytam* of lengthened duration may occur, rarely, in onomatopoetic words which denote shape and sound, it should not be represented in writing [as lengthened].[36]

41. When there is deficiency of sounds in words, the corresponding short vowels will stand after the long vowels and supplement the deficiency.[37]

42. The sound *i* and the sound *u* occur to supplement the two phonemes *ai* and *au*.[38]

43. The seven long vowels alone [may occur] as one-syllable independent words.

44. None of the five short vowels occurs as a word by itself.

45. [One] way to classify occurring words is [to classify them] as being words [formed by] one vocalized symbol, words [formed by] two vocalized symbols, and words [formed by] the combination of more than two [vocalized] symbols.[39]

46. The nature of consonant[s] [is] that they are combined with the sound *a*.

47. It is not a mistake that, when any [consonant] phoneme denotes itself, it [occurs according to] the disturbance in the nature of the distribution of consonants.[40]

48. The three [phonemes] *y*, *r*, *ḻ* may be followed by *k*, *c*, *t*, *p*, *ṅ*, *ñ*, *n*, *m* [and thus they] form two consonant [clusters].

49. Among those, *r* and *ḻ* cannot be [finally] preceded by short vowels.

50. As shortness and length [of vowels] are defined by measure of quantity, all polysyllabic words are of the nature of long [monosyllables].

51. At the end of a metrical composition, in the word [denoting] likeness, *ṉ* and *m* will form a two-consonant cluster.[41]

52. *m* after *ṉ* will be shortened.

53. Learned men say that the nature of a sound
will not be altered
whether it is pronounced occurring in a word,
or appears pronounced otherwise.

54. *a* and *i* become *ai.*

55. *a* and *u* become *au.*

56. When the consonant *y* occurs after *a,*
it will also appear as receiving
the shape of the long component *ai.*

57. When examining [some] words,
there exist environments [in which] [it]
has one measure of quantity.[42]

58. *i* and *y* alternate in the final position.[43]

59. All the twelve vowels occur at the beginning of words.

60. Consonants cannot occur initially in words
unless followed by vowels.

61. *k, t, n, p* and *m*, those five consonants
may be followed by any vowel
when occurring initially.

62. The phoneme *c* can similarly stand initially
except when followed by *a, ai* and *au.*

63. *v* does not occur together with
the four vowels *u, ū, o,* ō [initially].

64. *ñ* is accompanied by the three vowels
ā, e, o [initially].

65. *y* does not occur initially except
when followed by *ā.*

66. Other [consonants] which do not occur initially
will occur initially [when they] denote themselves.

67. The overshort *u*, when it occurs
in a noun denoting relationship,[44]
will occur initially pronounced
before the consonant *n*.[45]

68. With the full *u*, the meaning will not change,
if that item will occur in its place.[46]

69. [All] vowels except *au* occur finally.

70. *Au* will also occur if preceded by *k* [or] *v*.

71. The vowel *e* combined with consonant does not
occur finally.

72. *o* behaves equally except [when preceded by] *n*.

73. The vowels *ē* [and] *ō* do not occur with *n* [finally].

74. *u* and *ū* will not be uttered [finally] with *v* [or] *n*.[47]

75. There are only two words ending in —*cu*.[48]

76. It is said that there is [only] one [occurrence]
of -*pu* ; it will give ' active ' or ' causative ' meaning.[49]

77. The remaining [vowels] have no restriction.

78. Only the eleven consonants *ñ*, *ṇ*, *n*, *m*, *ṉ*, *y*, *r*, *l*, *v*, *ḻ*, *ḷ*
can occur finally.

79. *n* agrees with *cu* [in occurring finally in two
words].[50]

80. *ñ* is like *pu*, but [unlike it] has no double meaning.[51]

81. The sound *v* stands at the end of four words.[52]

82. It is said that there are nine words which belong
without doubt to the non-personal gender in which
ṉ occurs finally without having the chance
of being substituted by *m*.[53]

CHAPTER III : *Generating [speech sounds].*

83. It will be evident on careful observation
that all sounds when pronounced are produced in different ways
as the results of the modifications undergone
by the rising air[54] starting from the navel[55]
and passing through the eight places in [its] course—
the head, and the throat, and the chest,[56]
the teeth, and the lips, and the tongue, and the nose,[57]
and the palate.[58]

84. In that way
all the twelve vowels, without changing their quality,
are uttered with the air born in the throat.

85. Among them,
a, *ā*, those two, are uttered by opening the mouth.

86. The five sounds *i*, *ī*, *e*, *ē*, *ai* are produced
in a similar way like those,[59]
but they have contact of the edge[60] of the back
of the tongue with the teeth-ridge.[61]

87. The five sounds *u*, *ū*, *o*, *ō*, *au* are produced
by rounding the lips.

88. They say that the difference among them is slight.

89. *k* [and] *ṅ* [are produced by the contact of]
the back tongue[62] with the palate.[63]

90. *c* [and] *ñ* [are produced by the contact of]
the middle tongue[64] with the palate.

91. ṭ [and] ṇ [are produced by the contact of]
the tip of the tongue[65] with the palate.

92. Those six sounds are produced in three [different] ways.[66]

93. t [and] n, they are easily produced by the tip of the tongue spread out, [its] body touching [and] striking the place adjacent to the teeth [where they] join the palate.[67]

94. ṟ and ṉ, the two are produced when the tip of the tongue is raised[68] and strikes the palate.

95. **r** and **ḻ**, the two are produced when the tip of the tongue is raised and rubs the palate.

96. **l** and **ḷ**, the two are produced by the edge of the tongue swelling and coming into contact with the place adjacent the teeth, so that [it respectively] strikes and rubs[69] the palate at that place.

97. **p** [and] **m** are produced by the contact of the lips.

98. **v** is produced by the contact of the teeth and lips.

99. **y** is produced when the air arising in the throat reaches the palate [and] the place is choked up.[70]

100. Though the six soft (=nasal) sounds have [their] places of articulation in the regions discussed [above], the air of the nose[71] appears to give them shape.

101. The three which are revealed by research as such
as to be said not to have their own nature[72]
without occurring as dependant,[73]
resemble in production their respective
support[ing sounds] and maintain their nature
[as their own] nature, being alike in appearance.

102. The nature of the origin of the air
which starts from the navel[74]
and the modifications which it undergoes[75]
before it comes out as articulated speech in all sounds,
and of its quantity therein,
is clearly investigated and given
in the secret scriptures of the Antaṇar.[76]

103. I have not discussed *that* here ;
I have discussed the measure of the noise[s]
which express meaning [produced by] the air
as it shapes the sound[s] outside.[77]

Comment on Chapter 1

The title of the 1st chapter, *nūṉmarapu,* means, lit. ' [grammatical] rules of the treatise ' or ' book '. Iḷampūraṇar's interpretation as ' principles ' or ' postulates of phonology ' is probably the right one ; *nūl* in the title of this chapter refers probably only to the *eḻuttatikāram.*

The chapter has 33 cūtras which deal with the following subjects : primary sounds (1), secondary sounds (2), short vowels (3), long vowels

(4), extra lengthening of vowels (5, 6), quantity (7), number of vowels (8), number of consonants (9), quantity of vocalized consonants (10), quantity of consonants (11), quantity of secondary sounds (12), quantity of shortened *m* (13), its graphic representation (14), graphic representation of consonants (15), graphic representation of *e* and *o* (16), graphic representation of vocalized consonants (17), mutual linear order of vowels and consonants (18), inventory of stops (19), inventory of nasals (20), inventory of semivowels (21), consonantal clusters (22-30), demonstrative vowels (31), interrogative vowels (32), extra lengthening of sounds in music (33).

There are some difficulties about a number of *cūttirams* even in this relatively simply written part of the book, notably about cs. 14, 22, 30, 33.

According to some interpretations, c. 14 refers to the difference between the written forms of *p* and *m*, the symbol for *m* differing from that for *p* by an internal dot. I do not agree : it is more probable that *Tolk.* refers to the graphic representation of the shortened *m*.

As far as c. 22 is concerned, it seems that Iḷampūraṇar's interpretation is the right one : *Tolk.* distinguishes two kinds of consonantal clusters—consonant clustering with another consonant (*meymmayaṅku*), and consonant clustering with identical consonant (*uṭaṉilai*), i.e. ' gemination '.

30 : In this *cūttiram*, it is not quite clear what is meant by *meynilai cuṭṭiṉ*. It may mean ' if the significance (meaning) is taken into consideration ' ; in this case, it would probably refer to ' meaningful ' or one kind of ' grammatical ' usage. Or, it may mean ' if the [over-all] situation of the consonants is pointed out ', that is, considering the (general) state and situation of (all) consonants, . . . etc.

Comment on Chapter 2

According to the commentators, the chapter discusses patterns of word-formations. I tend to agree with the further qualification of Iḷampūraṇar who states that sounds occurring as parts of a word (and not as occurring independently) are treated in this chapter. Hence my translation of its title as ' Rules [on the occurrence of phonemes in] words.'

The first 7 *cūttirams* (34-40) deal with dependent sounds (*cārpu*). Cs. 41-42 are about vowel clusters. These two *cūttirams*, together with c. 140, are very important in that they show clearly that vowel-clusters could and did occur in the pre- *Tolkāppiyam* and *Tolk.* period. This is confirmed

by the linguistic analysis of the earliest Tamil Brāhmī inscriptions in which vowel-clusters do frequently occur (cf. forms like *koṭioor* 'they who had given', *ceiya* 'which was done'). Cs. 43-44 deal with long and short vowels occurring as independent words, in c. 45 *Tolk.* divides words (*moḻi*) into monosyllabic, disyllabic, and polysyllabic. Consonants are pronounced with *a* (46). C. 47 speaks of exceptional distribution of consonants, c. 48 of three-consonant clusters; according to c. 49, *r* and *ḻ* cannot be (finally) preceded by short vowels. C. 50 deals with the behaviour of polysyllabic words (ending in *r* and *ḻ*?). Cs. 51 and 52 mention the final two-consonant cluster *-ṉm*. C. 53 seems to mention the basic stability of vowels in Tamil. Cs. 54-57 deal with the clusters *ai* and *au*. C. 56 supports the interpretation of the 'diphthong' *ai* as a phonemic sequence of *a* + *y*. The same is true about c. 58, according to which *i* and *y* alternate at the end of words. All vowels occur initially (60), and there are no initial consonant clusters (61). Cs. 61-65 list the restrictions on the consonants occurring with vowels. The extremely important c. 62 rules out the initial occurrence of the sequence *ca-*, *cai-* and *cau-*. The commentators themselves were aware that certain sequences, not occurring initially according to *Tolk.*, did in fact occur in the language. They either explain these forms as *āriyaccitaivu* (*Iḷam.* c. 62) 'corrupt forms of Aryan', or as *aḻivaḻakku* (*Iḷam.* 64, probably correctly *iḻivaḻakku* as found in *Nacc.*), i.e. 'the usage of the low', that is colloquial speech; but also as natural evolution of the standard language (Iḷam. c. 935). *Nacc.* refers to change coming from *ticaiccol* 'dialectal words' (*Nacc.* c. 64), and instead of speaking about the 'corruption of Aryan', he uses the term *vaṭacol* 'Sanskrit words'. For *ca-*, Ilam. gives *cakaṭam* 'cart' (found in *Puṟam* 102.2, *Kuṟ*. 165.3, *Naṟṟ*. 4.9), for *cai-* he gives *caiyam* 'mountain' (cf. *Parip.* 11.14). *Nacc.*, who is much later, gives in addition *camaḻppu* 'shame' (cf. *Parip.* 20.36) and *caṭṭi* 'earthern vessel'. He also quotes *cauriyam* 'bravery' for *cau-*. The initial occurrence of *cau-* is Middle Ta. only.

The problem is complicated. However, it seems that the language of the *Tolk.* is indeed a reflection of the state of affairs when the PDr sequence **ca-* could not occur in Tamil (at least not in its standard dialect). There were accordingly three possible developments of this sequence in Old Tamil, and all are well attested: (1) either **c-* was lost: cf. Ta. *aval* 'rice obtained from fried paddy by pestling it, unhusked rice steeped in water, dried and bruised': Kol. *cavli*, Nk. *savli* etc. 'pestle; or (2) **c–* was replaced by *t–*, as in PDr **caḻ–*, Tam. *taḻ-al* 'to glow'; or (3) **ca–* was changed to *ce–*, as in PDr **cal–* 'to go': Ta. *cel*; the past stem *cett–* < **catt–* (from *cā* 'to die').

The forms with *ca–* and *cai–* in Tamil are either somewhat later than the *Tolk.*, or belong to a different non-standard dialect. What is true about *ca–* etc., is also true about *ña–* and *ya–* in initial positions.

According to cs. 64 and 65, there are important restrictions on the initial occurrence of *ñ* – and *y*–. Iḷam. quotes an item, *ñaḻiyiṟṟu*, the meaning of which is unknown, as coming from 'vulgar' usage. Nacc. adds *ñamali* 'dog' (occurring early in *Puṟam* 74.3, *Kuṟ*. 179.2 and elsewhere). As for *ya*–, Iḷam. gives *yavaṉar* 'Yavanas, foreigners', a well-attested loanword, but no examples of *yŭ*–, *yŏ*– and *yau*–. These are given only by *Nacc.* : *yutti* 'inference', *yūpam* 'sacrificial pillar' (*Puṟam* 15.21), *yōkam* 'waistband' (later, *Cilapp.* 14.170) and *yauvaṉam* ; all loans from Aryan. There are two instances of *ñi*– in Old Tamil, viz. *ñimiṟu* 'honey-bee' (*Puṟ*. 93.12 and elsewhere) and *ñiṇam* 'flesh' (*Puṟ*. 177.14).

Either all these forms, found in the Caṅkam texts (other than loanwords, naturally) are reflections of pre-*Tolkāppiyam* state of affairs (i.e. pre-Ta. **ca*–, **ña*–, **ñi* –, **ya*–), or the poems containing the forms are as such pre-*Tolkāppiyam* ; or, some of the forms were current in non-standard, non-literary dialects of Tamil, and crept into the literary language later, in post-*Tolk*. days, as it is certainly true about some of the loanwords and such words which contain the sequences *cau*–, *yŭ*– and *yau*–, which are only Middle Tamil.

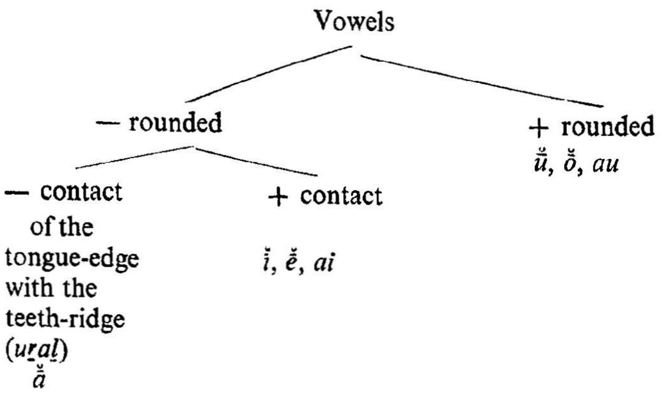
The following 2 cs. deal with the shorter *u*, and accord. to c. 69, all vowels except *au* occur finally, *au* only after *k* and *v* (70). The next interesting and important c. is 74 which says quite clearly that *ŭ* cannot occur (finally) after *n* and *v*. *Iḷam.* gives contrary examples (*novvu* 'suffering', *kavvu* 'catching') and *Nacc.* adds a number of common words like *katavu* 'door', *turavu* 'seek' etc. This basic rule of *Tolk.* indeed reflects the state of affairs when intervocalic – *p*– in final positions had not yet been 'weakened' and 'spirantized' to *v*. In genuine *Tolk. cūttirams* the form *aḷapu* is used. However, in the text itself, we have forms like *aḷavu* and *kaḷavu*. There are three possible explanations for such inconsistence : (1) either *Tolk.* sets up a rule which he himself does not observe—a rule which is no more very 'active' and rather the reflection of a more ancient state of things. This is possible. (2) Or, the forms with – *vu* are errors committed by later copyists influenced by the common usage of their time. (3) Or the *cūttiram*s containing the –*vu* forms are as such later interpolations.

Accord. to c. 75 there are only two words ending in –*cu*, according to c. 76 there is one word ending in –*pu*, i.e. *tapu*, 'die ; destroy'. All cognates in *DED* 2495 show –*v*– ; the Tamil form, however, seems to be more ancient, reflecting a state when the intervocalic – *p* – still retained its obstruent quality. In cs. 78-81, *Tolk.* deals with consonantal endings. For the discussion of the words ending in –*ṉ* and –*ñ*, cf. K. Zvelebil, *Comparative Dravidian Phonology*, 1970, pp. 130 and 137.

Comment of Chapter 3

1. In 83, there is undoubtedly a very close similarity between the text of *Tolk.* and that of *pāṇiniyaśikṣā.* Both texts speak of *eight places* —the Ta. text of *eṉ muṟai nilai,* the Skt. text of *aṣṭhāu sthanāni.* There is a different order, though : in the Skt. text, the order is ' chest, throat, head, tongue-root, teeth, nose, lips, palate ' ; the Tamil order is ' head, throat, chest, teeth, lips, tongue, nose, palate '. Another point of difference is that the Skt. text has *jihvāmūlam* ' the root of the tongue ', whereas the Tamil text has only *nā* ' tongue ', though in 86 and 89, the Ta. grammar uses a term for the ' back portion of the tongue ', viz. *mutalnā.* In fact, according to cs. 86, 89, 90, 81, 94, *Tolk.* distinguishes among *mutal nā* ' back (root) portion of the tongue ', *iṭai nā* ' middle portion of the tongue ', and *nuṉi nā* ' the tip of the tongue '.

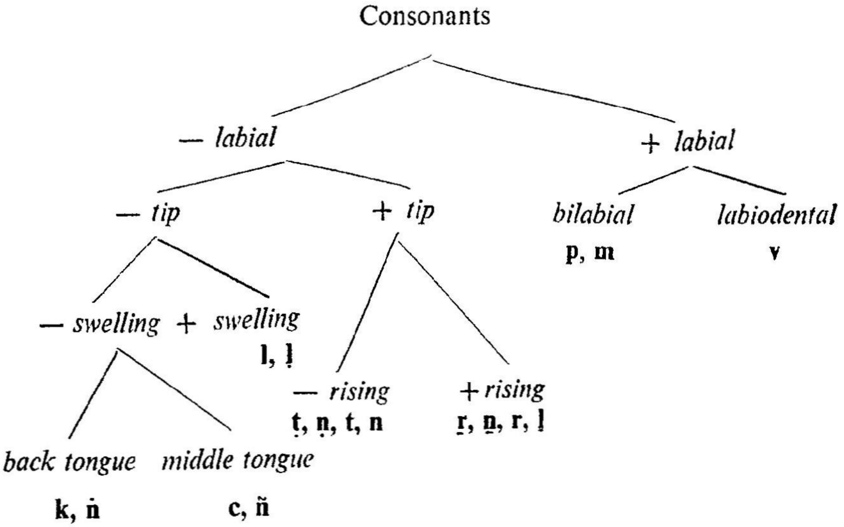
2. From the articulatory point of view (*piṟappu* ' articulation, production ', lit. ' birth '), sounds (*eḻuttu*) are classified by *Tolk.* first into VOWELS (cs. 84-88) and CONSONANTS (89-100). *Vowels* are classified as follows : First, *a* and *ā* are grouped together; second *i, ī, e, ē, ai* ; third, *u, ū, o, ō, au.* Since these are all vowels, there is only a slight difference among them (c. 88). The first two groups, i.e. *ā̆*, and *ī̆, ē̆, ai,* are considered to belong to a larger group which is distinct for ' opening of the mouth '. This obviously refers to the unrounded vowels, since *ū̆, ō̆, au* are classified separately and quite clearly as rounded vowels. *Tolkāppiyam*'s classification of vowels based on the place and manner of their articulation may be thus symbolized as follows :



The ' contact ' (*uṟaḻ*) in c. 86 is quite obvious, and I can hardly understand why it has provoked so much discussion. It cannot but be translated as ' contact of the edge[s] of the back portion of the tongue with the place adjacent to the teeth' (in agreement with Iḷampūraṇar), and this is precisely what is diagnostic about unrounded palatal vowels

when compared with *a*, *ā*. It is enough for the reader to produce carefully *ī*, *ĕ*, *ai*, and to observe his tongue-movements.

Consonants are classified first according to the movements of the *tongue* as articulator, then according to the movements of the *lips*. Thus the primary dichotomy as far as the *place* of articulation is concerned is conceived by Tolkāppiyaṉār as / + labial/ : / — labial/. The next important division is / + apical/ : / — apical/, according to whether the tip of the tongue articulates or not. The / — apical/ consonants are further dichotomized according to the presence of the feature / + swelling of the tongue/, and those which do not have the feature, are finally classified into 'middle tongue' and 'back tongue' consonants. The / + apical/ consonants are further dichotomized into those which do have the feature / + rising of the tongue/ and those which do not have it. Labials are divided into bilabials and labiodentals. Thus the following picture emerges (ignoring *y* which stands apart), based on the classification of the articulatory movements of the tongue and the lips, the two most readily and strikingly observable articulators :



This interesting and original classification is criss-crossed by the chief 'feature' dichotomy in the *manner* of articulation which is obviously that of contact (*uṟu*) between *oṟṟal* 'closer contact, striking' which produces mainly occlusion, and *varuṭal* 'lesser contact' which produces mainly friction. According to this criterion, the consonants are divided as follows :

oṟṟal	*varuṭal*
'closer contact, occlusion'	'lesser contact, friction'
t, n, ṟ, ṉ, l	**r, ḻ, ḷ**

3. Cs. 102-103 are I suppose of utmost importance. According to these *nūṟpās*, *Tolk.* does not consider sounds which do not convey MEANING (like e.g. whistling, or clicking the tongue) worthy of attention. Also, the emphasis given by *Tolk.* to the significance of speech sounds may be the key to our understanding of the fact that Tolkāppiyaṉār's analysis of Tamil speech sounds is basically *phonemic*. *Tolk.* says quite clearly that it is not concerned with sounds which do not convey meaning, but only with such sounds, or rather such *noises* produced by the air (*vaḷiyicai*) outside (*scil.* the navel, larynx etc.) which convey meaning (*mey teri*). Meaning, obviously, was for Tolkāppiyaṉār as indispensable when analysing language as it is for the most recent (semologically oriented) linguistics.

FOOTNOTES (*To Chapter I*)

1 The term *eḻuttu* means : (1) sound (phone, *Laut*), (2) phoneme, (3) letter (graphic symbol, grapheme). In the 1st line, obviously, *eḻuttu* stands for graphic representation of the phoneme (since the 'secondary' sounds are excluded from the term *eḻuttu*).

2 *aḷapu* 'measure, quantity'.

3 *kuṟṟeḻuttu*.

4 *neṭṭeḻuttu*.

5 *pulavar*.

6 *nīṭṭam*.

7 *māttirai* > Skt *mātrā*.

8 *kaṇṇimai*.

9 *noṭi*. This is considered, with some justice, a later, interpolated verse. If so, however, some of the following verses, e.g. 11, should also be considered interpolated.

10 *uyir*, lit. 'life, life-breath'.

11 *mey*, lit. 'body'.

12 i.e. the 'other' three sounds, i.e. shortened *i*, shortened *u*, and *āytam*, are also half (a *māttirai*?) each.

13 *uruvu* : graphic shape.

14 *puḷḷi*.

15 i.e. having a *puḷḷi* like the consonants.

16 *valleḻuttu* : stops.

17 *melleḻuttu* : nasals.

18 *iṭaiyeḻuttu* : liquids.

19 The exact meaning is not clear. The most probable interpretation: *meymmayaṅku* (commentators : *meymmayakkam*) is combination of two non-identical consonants ; *uṭaṉilai* (comm. : *uṭaṉilai* [*meym*] *mayakkam*) is combination of two identical consonants.

20 *puḷḷi* is translated here as 'single (i.e. un-vocalised) consonant'; 'consonant' is simply *mey* ; vocalised consonant is *uyirmey*.

21 E.g. *kaṭka, kaṭci, kaṭpa* ; *kaṟka, muyaṟci, kaṟpa* ; *celka, valci, celpa, koḷka, nīḷcinai, koḷpa*.

22 E.g. *kolyāṉai, celvam* ; *veḷyāṟu, kaḷvaṉ*.

23 E.g. *teṅku, mañcu, vaṇṭu, pantu, kampu, kaṉṟu*.

24 E.g. *veṇkalam, puṉkaṉ, veṇcāntu, puṉcey, veṇñāṇ poṉñāṉ, veṇpali, poṉperitu, veṇmālai, poṉmālai, maṇyātu, poṉyātu, maṇvalitu, poṉvalitu*.

25 E.g. *uriñyātu, porunyātu, tirumyātu, tevyātu*.

26 E.g. *nilamvalitu* (Iḷampūraṇar).

27 The 'initial sounds' (*mutalākeḻuttu*) are the 9 consonants which may occur initially in the language of *Tolk.*, i.e. *k, c, ñ, t, n, p, m, y, v*.

28 In other words, no 'gemination' of ṟ and ḷ.

29 *cuṭṭu*.

30 *viṉā*.

FOOTNOTES (*To Chapter II*)

[31] i.e. with—*miyā* in imperatives like *kēṇmiyā* 'listen !'

[32] In this c., *toṭarmoḻi*=polysyllabic (i.e. more than disyllabic) word, e.g. *va-ra-ku* 'millet'. and disyllabic word of the pattern— u (e.g. *teṅku* 'coconut tree').

[33] It occurs e.g. in *cukkukkōṭu* or *cekkukkaṇai*.

[34] E.g. *eḫku, kaḫcu, veḫkāmai*, i.e. (C) V̆ ஃ P V̆.

[35] Cf. *kal tītu* > *kaḫrītu, mul tītu* > *muḫtītu*.

[36] *Iḷamp.* gives *kaḫṛu* 'darkness' (as illustr. of 'shape') and *cuḫṛu* 'noise produced by the movement of palmyra leaves' (as illustr. of 'sound').

[37] i.e. the *aḷapeṭai*, or combination of a long vowel and the corresponding (*otta*) short vowel, e.g. *āa, īi*.

[38] *Iḷamp.* quotes only *aii* and *auu* without giving concrete examples. Later commentators quote items like *manauukam* (the meaning of which is however unknown). For vowel clusters, see the comment on this Chapter.

[39] The rather ambiguous term *eḻuttu* means here 'vocalized [consonantal] symbol' or 'vowel-symbol'; i.e., for the purposes of this cūttiram, *a*, or *ā*, or *ka*, or *kā* is one *eḻuttu*; instances: *ōreḻuttorumoḻi*=*ā* 'cow', *kā* 'protect'; *īreḻuttorumoḻi*=*ma-ṇi* 'bell'; *toṭarmoḻi* =*ka-ṉa-vi-ri* 'red oleander'.

[40] E.g. *ṭ* does never occur initially in standard Tamil: however, in the word *ṭakāram* 'the letter (or phoneme) ṭ', it does occur in Anlaut.

[41] E.g. *Parip.* 10.55 : *ticaiyaṟi mīkāṉum pōṉm*.

[42] The commentary quotes *iṭaiyaṉ* 'shepherd' and *maṭaiyaṉ* 'cook' as examples.

[43] The commentary quotes *nāy* and *nāi* 'dog'. Cf. the colloquial form *nāyi*.

[44] a. *uraippeyar*.

[45] Accord. to the comm., in *nuntai* 'your father'.

[46] In other words, in *nuntai*, overshort and short *u* are just free variants.

[47] Cf. however forms like *aḷavu* 'measure' (cs. 11 and 13 of some editions) side by side with the more ancient (and 'correct') *aḷapu* (cs. 3, 4, 5); *kaḷavu* (c. 1046).

[48] The commentators give *ucu* 'wood-worm' and *mucu* 'a kind of monkey' as illustrations. *pacu*, accord. to *Iḷam.*, is a 'mutilation of an Aryan form'.

[49] The item in question is *tapu* (*DED* 2495) 'to die; to destroy'. Accord. to Iḷam., the distinction between the underlying 'active' and the 'causative' meaning depends on the pronunciation: if pronounced in 'low tone' (*paṭuttuccol*), it means 'die' (*cā*); when in 'high tone' (*eṭuttuccol*), it means 'make another die' (*cāvi*).

[50] Accord. to *Iḷam.*, these two are *poruṉ* 'fight' (alternating however with *poru*, cf. *DED* 3708) and *veriṉ* 'back', occurring also as *ven/veṉ*, cf. *DED* 4518.

[51] Accord. to *Iḷam.*, the one word which ends in—*ñ* is *uriñ* 'rub'.

[52] Accord. to *Iḷam.*, these four are *av* 'that', *iv* 'this' *uv* 'the intermediate' and *tev*, 'enmity'. I am rather inclined to think that the fourth one *Tolk.* had in mind was *ev* 'which'.

[53] This means, in other words, that in all but these nine items, —*m* alternated with—*ṉ* in *aḫriṇai* (non-personal, neuter) nouns. Among the nine given by *Iḷam.* are words like *ekiṉ* 'swan', *kuyiṉ* 'cloud'. *pulaṉ* 'tube'.

FOOTNOTES (*To Chapter III*)

[54] *muntuvaḷi* 'air [in the body]', 'breath'.

[55] *unti*.

[56] *talai* 'head' as resonator? Cf. Skt. *śiras* in *Pāṇinīyaśikṣā*; *miṭaṟu* 'throat', cf. Skt. *kaṇṭha* in *Pāṇiniyaś.*; *neñcu* 'chest', cf. Skt. *uras* in the above-mentioned text.

[57] *pal* 'teeth', cf. Skt. *dantāḥ* in the text mentioned above; *itaḻ* 'lips', cf. Skt. *uṣṭhāu* in *Pāṇiniyaś.*, *nā* 'tongue', cf. Skt. *jihvāmūlam* in Pāṇini; *mūkku* 'nose', cf. Skt. *nāsika* in Pāṇini.

[58] *aṇṇam* 'palate', cf. Skt. *tālu* in Pāṇini.

[59] i.e. like *a* and *ā*.

[60] *viḷimpu* 'border, edge, margin'.

[61] *aṇpal, lit.* [the region] 'near the teeth'.

[62] *mutalnā*.

[63] *aṇṇam*.

[64] *iṭainā*.

[65] *nuṉinā*. The exact interpretation of this term presents some difficulties. We have two alternatives: either to proceed in analogy with the terms in *cs.* 89 and 90 and translate *nuṉinā* as 'the front tongue'. Or to follow the meaning of *nuṉi* in which case we have to interpret the term as 'tip(ped) tongue'; i.e. 'tip of the tongue'. *nuni* (*DED* 3080) and its related items (*nuṉai*, Ma. *nuni*) has always the meaning of 'tip, point', never just 'front part'. Cf. also *nuti* 'tip, point'. Also, the interpretation of *nuṉinā* as 'tongue-tip' agrees rather closely with the actual articulatory movements when the cacuminal/retroflex *ṭ,ṇ* are generated.

[66] The difference refers of course to the 'back tongue', the 'middle tongue' and the 'tip tongue'. However, this *nūrpā* seems to be superfluous and hence may have been interpolated.

[67] ṭ and ṇ are described early as post-dental consonants which are articulated by the blade of the tongue in proper contact with the junction of the root of the upper teeth with the palate.

[68] *aṇar* 'to rise, move upwards'.

[69] i.e. with ḷ it strikes ('closer contact'), with ḻ it rubs ('lesser contact'), possibly indicating the flapping forward of the tongue immediately after contact when articulating ḷ.

[70] This curious statement probably means a very close passing of the air-stream so that a kind of friction arises against the palate.

[71] *mūkkin vaḷi.*

[72] *tamakku iyalpu ila.*

[73] *cārntuvariṉallatu.*

[74] *uraḻccivāram*; accord. to the commentary of Iḷampūraṇar, this odd compound signifies the air (*vaḷi*) rising from the region of the navel (*unti*), going up to the head (*talai*), and returning to the chest (*neñcu*). This is the source of the sound-producing vibrations.

[75] Somewhat free translation; the text speaks of *vaḷiyicai*, which is interpreted by *Iḷam.* so that this is a stage in the birth of the sound, a modification of the air mentioned above: the air is called *vaḷiyicai until* it reaches the chest whereupon it becomes speech-sounds (*eḻuttu*).

[76] We can hardly accept the opinion that *antaṇar maraittē* refers to the books or writings of the learned—as simply as that. I am afraid we have to admit that *maraitte* has to be interpreted as the 'secret', 'hidden' texts, i.e. the Vedic texts, and antaṇar as 'Brahmans'. This is the interpretation of *Iḷam. (pārppār vētattukkaṇṇatu)*, and it also corresponds to the fact that speech-sounds are measured according to their quantity (Ta. *alapu*) in the Vedas; further, it is well in accordance with the meaning of the following *cūttiram.*

[77] *Nacc.* takes *cs.* 102-103 as one. I prefer the arrangement of Iḷampuranar.

Tolkāppiyam—the Earliest Record

X. S. THANI NAYAGAM

A History of Tamil Literature is a field of study which does not begin at the beginning. We have no vestiges of Tamil poetry in its earliest literary form, but instead, the earliest work which has come down to us from antiquity, and which may be said to have been compiled not later than the fourth or third century B.C., namely, the *Tolkāppiyam*, presents the language and literature of the Tamils as developed, adult and mature, such as a language and literature might present themselves in a flourishing period of their history. This is a consideration which combined with considerations of the secular, humanistic and scientific nature of this earliest work, makes the study of this earliest recorded period of Tamil Literature both important and illuminating in the study of the literary history of Ancient India and Ceylon.

The *Tolkāppiyam* is the earliest work which has come down to us. We should like to have some biographical details of the author of this interesting work, and yet even his name is not so easily explained. *Kāppiyar* is a name the meaning of which is not readily available, and *Tol* means ancient or old. He probably belonged to a family of an ancient clan known as the Kāppiyar clan. It is surmised that he might have been a Jain. The work attributed to him may or may not have had a different name in his own time, but because of naming significant works of famous authors by the proper name of the authors themselves, the work of Tolkāppiyar the grammarian came to be designated with a genderless marker and was known as *Tolkāppiyam*.

The work consists altogether of approximately 1610 *nūrpā* or *cūttirams* which total 4,018 lines of what may be conveniently called grammatical verse similar to the grammatical verse of Pāṇini (4th c. B.C.) and the Sanskrit grammarians, and the mnemonic grammatical literature of the Greek and Latin grammarians. With regard to this comprehensive codex on Grammar and Poetics, the function of the historian of literature might confine itself to showing how far the book is evidence of an advanced stage of evolution in Literature and in Literary Criticism. To call it a grammatical work in the modern sense is not a complete description of the work, since it includes by and large also what the Greeks and the Romans knew as Rhetoric, and other portions which are specifically pertinent to literary criticism.

A great amount of grammatical and prosodical literature has preceded this work, which but claims to summarise and codify existing works on Grammar and Poetics, and does so in the cryptic and laconic language

of *nūrpā* or *cūttirams* some of which are not clear today even to professional scholars. In these *nūrpās*, not a little is to be understood, interpreted and supplied from the context of the already existing body of grammatical and literary knowledge which is presupposed. There are over 250 occurrences in which the author of the *Tolkāppiyam* uses explicit or implicit terms which show that he is basing his rules on what preceding authorities have said with regard to the particular section of Linguistics or Grammar or Poetics with which he is dealing, as for instance, lines like :[1]

> 'They call it Yāppu (prosody), the authorities who are versed in Yāppu (prosody)' (386).
>
> 'Those who write poetry have so decreed' (457).
>
> 'The Ancient poets call it *Tōl*.' (539).

This frequent appeal to precedent and authority, and the cryptic language of the *cūttirams* which presuppose oral commentary to explain them, is made quite naturally as an accepted style, in meeting the exigencies of metre as well as to enumerate, classify and explain. The content of *Tolkāppiyam* is such that, judging by the time taken for the development of comparable literatures, it would not be rash to suppose that *at least* three to four centuries of a flourishing literary culture have preceded the date of its composition.

The First two parts consisting of 946 *cūttirams* deal mostly with Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax ; it is the third part which is most pertinent to a History of Literature and to Literary Criticism. The third part is entitled *poruḷatikāram*, and can very well be interpreted as the Content (*Poruḷ*) of Literature or even as the Theory of Meaning. The *cūttirams* are divided into nine sub-sections, five of which deal with the content of poetry, one with the Theory of Emotions, one with the Theory of Imagery, one with Prosody, and the last with aspects of Semantics and usage. The content of Literature is treated in four sub-sections in a special manner, but the literary theme runs through the entire work and is classified into the two major areas of ancient Tamil letters, known as *Akam* and *Puṟam*. These two terms of Tamil Poetics do not admit of readily intelligible definitions and description, but they are easily understood by those conversant with the classical Tamil poems. *Akam* embraces the area of the emotion of inter-personal love between the two sexes and its related sentiments, and *Puṟam* what pertains to all other human emotions not included in the former. All anonymous poetry of the first category describing premarital and post-marital love is *Akam*, while bardic, panegyric, heroic, epic, elegiac and gnomic poetry would all come under *Puṟam*.[2]

It might be helpful to give in broad outline the content of the third book of *Tolkāppiyam* which especially deals with poetic themes. In

Akattiṇai Iyal, (*Akam*-area-division) the author deals with personal love poetry, and the Time-Space segment within which these poems are sung, the manner in which Nature is to form the sympathetic background to various manifestations of pre-marital and post-marital love, and the type of poetic imagery and figures of speech to be drawn from each Natural region by utilising the flora and fauna, the technologies and aesthetic objects of each region as the basis for imagery (C. 947-981). The *cūttirams* which follow outline in general manner the substance of the kind of monologues or conversations which the foster-mother of the beloved, the friend and companion of the beloved, the lover, the neighbours and others may indulge in poetry (982-988). Then follow certain characteristic poetic forms used only for this particular class of poetry, and certain exceptions (989-1001).

In *Puṟattiṇai Iyal*, (*Puṟam*-area-division) are classified bardic, panegyric, elegiac and heroic poetry, in some manner made to parallel the regional divisions mentioned in the first section on Love. Different strategic movements commencing (*a*) with Cattle-lifting as an initial movement of war, followed by, (*b*) the forward movements of an army of conquest, (*c*) laying siege, (*d*) the engagement in battle or prolonged conflict by encamped armies, (*e*) the ensuing victory, (*f*) the reflections on the uncertainties of war and of life, and the blessings of peace, and finally (*g*) the eulogy subsequent to Victory and the several kinds of panegyric poems which are possible (C. 1002-1037), are treated as the main isolated areas or divisions, different aspects of which may form the themes of single and unconnected poems. Each of the seven main strategic divisions of themes has other sub-movements and sub-themes classified under it. The main area or division is known as *tiṇai*, and the subdivision or sub-theme is known as *tuṟai*.[3]

In these first two parts of *Tolkāppiyam* is evident the concern to bring all poetry into one of the seven classifications of *Akam* poetry and into one of the corresponding seven classifications of *Puṟam* poetry. Five of the classifications in each class of poetry have a particular landscape ascribed to each. The last two classifications in each class, have no landscape as background probably because these two classes of poetry were not included in the earlier divisions, or because they were considered of less importance. The classification of *Akam* poetry and the appropriation of a corresponding landscape seems very natural, and the sympathetic background of nature is exploited to the full. But the two other sections on Unilateral love and Inordinate Passion do not seem to have been included in the original classification, but appear to be a subsequent introduction. This seems likely to have happened also regarding the classification of heroic poetry. There is an attempt to make the *Puṟam* classification correspond to the *Akam* classification, but the choice of a symbolic name of a plant or flower and a corresponding region for the

Puṟam classification seems to be strained. One can perhaps, trace in the classification of this regional division a stratification, three different stages, a first stage when the love poetry alone was classified into four or five regional categories, a second stage when two other categories of unilateral love, and Lustful Passion (*Peruntiṇai*) were added, and a third in which the heroic poetry was classified into seven categories and made to correspond or parallel the seven categories of love poetry. This process should have taken considerable time and supposes a considerable output of poetry. There are comparatively few poems which in the *Akam* section are included in the unilateral Love and Lust sections, and the lack of a landscape and a patron deity—all these might be indications that these divisions were an afterthought or that they were considered more deviations of normal behaviour, not meriting elaboration. Similarly the *Puṟam* divisions do not correspond in all possible correspondences to the *Akam* division, and the seventh division which in *Akam* as unilateral love is not of much significance, becomes in the *Puṟam* division extremely important and forms the bulk of panegyric poetry, an admirer's eulogy.

Tolkāppiyar is but restating and reformulating the practice obtaining in his time, but the stages of sophistication which have been pointed out are indications of the long period of literary culture which must have preceded him.

The *Kaḷaviyal* and *Kaṟpiyal* contain particulars of detailed and specific situations for the period of Courtship (*Kaḷaviyal*) and for the post-marital period (*Kaṟpiyal*) (1038-1140). The term used for the period of courtship has the significance of a hidden or clandestine love period, that is the period in which the lovers with the connivance of their intimate friends attempt to keep their newly established relationship hidden from their own elders and from society at large. The ideal lovers portrayed in poetry are of more or less equal birth and status, and endowed with noble qualities of mind and body. A chance meeting occurs, and the Male from a distance resolves that the form he sees is not divine but human, and love at first sight follows almost instantaneously. The male is endowed with heroic qualities, and the female with characteristically feminine graces of timidity, modesty and shyness. Once their eyes have met and they have by a decree of fate, as it were, loved each other, the psycho-somatic effects of love, like losing weight, forgetfulness, suspicion of others that they might be suspecting the clandestine relationship, hopefulness and anxiety, are common to both lovers (1046). The Lover then seeks any excuse to touch his beloved, and by all means of a lover's persuasion to be physically united to her. This again would seem to point to a time in Tamil society, when actual physical union preceded, as is the custom in some 'primitive societies' today, the ceremonial marriage. Here, we observe, that what was much earlier, a fluctuating

or ordinary practice, has frozen into a poetic convention by Tolkāppiyar's time, though presumably before his time the practice had ceased to be part of actually prevalent mores. These *cūttirams* are followed by others in which with great detail and subtle psychological experience, the kind of sentiments, emotions and speech proper to all those who figure in these situations are stated—the Lover, his friend and companion ; the Beloved, her friend and companion, the natural mother of the Beloved and the Foster Mother of the Beloved, the Seers and the Learned. The role they play in the poems are deliberately and precisely stated, and the kind of conversations, monologues and apostrophes of which the lovers in love are capable. The lovers seek every opportunity to meet either by day or by night, and in arranging these trysts and protecting the interests of her lady, the Companion of the Beloved or *Tōḻi*, is required to display remarkable psychological acumen and even much humour (1047-1087).

The section on *Karpiyal* deals with the period subsequent to the ceremonial marriage, and hence the *cūttirams* outline the many circumstances in which husband and wife become characters in situational poems. During this period, the husband may have to part from his home for purposes of trade, or on behalf of his king or chief, proceed on an embassy or as member of a fighting force, or for the purposes of higher education. If he does leave home for purposes of higher education, he might not be separated from his wife, by poetic convention, for more than three years ; if, for the other reasons, he is expected to return to his wife and home within the period of a year, (1134-35).

There is again the temporary separation which ensues because of the husband's interest in courtesans, and here the poems deal with extra-marital love-life, and the manner in which the infidel husband is reconciled to his ever patient wife. The intermediaries between husband and wife in the course of married life are mentioned, and the functions they perform. It is accepted that the situations encountered and the psychology of lovers and their relationship during the married stage are different from those of the courtship period, and children have come in to act as a bond of union and a means of reconciliation on occasions of domestic unhappiness. The character outlined of the husband is one of a brave and daring man full of initiative and of life, and of the wife is one of patient love and of understanding, ever prepared to complain but also to be reconciled. The husband longs to return after his journeys, and the poetic tradition has been such that he is not allowed to halt on the way but hurries to his beloved in a chariot yoked to horses which speed through the intervening distance like birds on their wings (1088-1140).

The *cūttirams* in *Poruḷiyal* (1141-1194) form an appendix to the earlier sections, and refer to the monologues which may be made by the lovers, and the discreet enquiries and suggestions by the friend of the girl in love.

Once her mistress has to fall in love she must persuade the male, in all circumstances, to go through the public and ceremonial rites of marriage as early as possible. The young man, will no doubt, postpone the day; that is the universal failing of his kind, but she, by persuasion and threats should hasten the day of the wedding.

The next section *Meippāṭṭiyal* deals with the psychosomatic states or organic states which occur in poetry (1195-1221). These are classified into eight primary emotions which are corporeally revealed, and these are defined as Laughter, Sorrow, Pity, Wonder, Fear or Timidity, Pride or Honour, Anger, Happiness, and Joy or Pleasure. Each of these eight states are again subdivided into four, and make thirty-two emotional states which manifest themselves through some visible change or other, particularly in the face and in the eyes. This section indicates the kind of emotions which the poet is to express in his poetry, and the hearer or reader of the poetry may experience, and the actor or dancer of such themes may manifest, in his mime and pantomime. The student is warned that an understanding and study of the somatic manifestations of the emotions is not possible except to one who uses his eyes and ears, and obtains experience by observation.

A Theory of the Simile as the basis for all imagery is contained in the short section entitled *Uvamai-iyal*, (1222-1258). It enumerates the classifications of comparisons and the prepositional markers which introduce them. There is explanation of the special kind of parallelistic simile, the *uḷḷuṟaiuvamai* (literally the within-embedded-simile) which is used particularly in *Akam* poetry to describe euphemistically and allegorically the extra-marital relations of an infidel husband.

The section on *Prosody* (1222-1499) covers not only the elements of prosody and the kinds of metres and their variations, 'obtaining in the beautiful grove that is the Tamil country, ruled by the three kings', (1330) but also differentiates between a kind of poetic prose and strict poetry, and mentions the literary genre which uses these as media. From this section in particular one may argue anterior literary development. It is said here that poetic prose may be introduced at certain stages of long poems. It is also stated that poetic prose may be used in poetry to reproduce conversational language, and in the composition of fables and of comedy and allegory (1429). The *cūttirams* further mention a wide range of literary works for which prosody and literary criticism are used, such as proverbs, philosophical dicta, 'travel-guide poetry', the poetry on childhood, satires, allegories, riddles, ethical works, gnomic poetry, lyrics, authentic epics, long idylls and narrative poems, and soft melifluous poetry to be set to music. It is seen from these *cūttirams* that provision existed even at that period of antiquity for the use of colloquial and dialectical language in popular drama, and in another literary *genre* the

nearest parallel to which may be modern opera (1491-1499). There are also rules here and elsewhere which prescribe for the usage of Sanskrit loans and provide for the translation of foreign works into Tamil. New forms of literature are also provided for, in the term 'viruntu' which originally meant 'newcomer' and which is used for new literary forms which might come into being according to the creative capacity and ingenuity of the poet.

The rich and varied development of poetry is also seen in the number of metres and variations which were possible in the Tamil poetry of Tolkāppiyar's age (1259-1499). Therefore, in establishing any theory concerning the development of the classical literature of a subsequent epoch or outlining the trends and transition of genres, it would be necessary to take into account, these genres which have been lost.

The last section which is short (1500-1610) deals with semantic usage or lexical tradition, and with traditional methods of literary understanding and exposition. This section indicates that the language has been so long in use, that already it has evolved distinctive obsolete forms, and words exist which have shifted their meanings or need explanations for Tolkāppiyar's contemporaries. This section forms a glossary of words, terms, and even customs, which require to be restated to Tolkāppiyar's own generation. Many of these usage and literary genres are not obtained in subsequent literature, and can be only explained as applicable to literature which preceded the composition of *Tolkāppiyam*. Later commentators (10th c.-16th c. A.D.) on the *Tolkāppiyam* are at a loss to identify these genres.

The sophistication and systematisation of poetic experience and the philosophical rationalisation of life based on the areas of human experience supposed in the *Tolkāppiyam* are not to be interpreted as having been a set of strict norms applied by poets in composing all their poetry. We are not certain as to the extent to which the *Tolkāppiyam* controlled the poet's own concepts and imagery. They were broad and general classifications which were prescribed to guide the poet in his productions, and much more the student and the critic, in his search for a theory of meaning. There was always provision for not following rigidly these classifications, though subsequent grammarians and editors and compilers of anthologies, made these classifications even more rigid by their interpretations, and classified classical poetry into much more rigorous sections and subsections. The *Tolkāppiyam* shows no great rigidity whereby the poet's freedom or spontaneity was restricted, though the book remains, however, witness to an elaborate and extensive grammatical and literary tradition. And yet, there are grounds to surmise that in *Poruḷatikāram* Tolkāppiyar is concerned mostly with situational poetry, and has not concerned himself in detail with the other several genre which

he has listed. Of the other works which should have existed at his time, his is the only one which has reached us. Perhaps, those which have been lost, dealt with other media of poetic experience, like poems longer than those contained in the *Caṅkam* anthologies, and themes like devotion, ethics and works on lyrics and drama, or, perhaps *only a portion of the Poruḷatikāram has reached us.*

This seems probable because some of the literary forms which he enumerates, are not identified in subsequent literature or in subsequent grammatical treatises, and, even if identified, are not found precisely as he describes them. Even the classical poetry, the bulk of which was composed between the first century B.C. and the end of the second century A.D., does not conform to all the norms of *Tolkāppiyam*[4] sufficient time has passed between the *Tolkāppiyam* and the Classical or *Caṅkam* literature, for new morphological and syntactical elements to have been introduced in language, and for variations in metre and new forms in poetry. The *Tolkāppiyam* came to be restudied from the 10th c. to 16th century, when grammarians utilised it for their own grammars and for writing assiduous commentaries on the *Tolkāppiyam* itself. But both the grammarians and the commentators were at a loss to elucidate certain portions, linguistic, grammatical, and critical, and to illustrate with appropriate examples a number of *nūṟpā*, and can provide no examples for certain literary genres.

As a source book not only of linguistic and grammatical study but also of human geography, social anthropology, culture ecology and culture change of a past age, the *Tolkāppiyam* contains very valuable data, and Ralph Linton in his work *Tree of Culture* has been able to note its importance from a secondary source which was available to him.[5] Its importance for the study of Tamil culture and of cultures in general cannot be exaggerated. The different regions, their plant and human ecology, the regional technology, social classes and aesthetic life appropriate to each geographical region, are classified in such a manner that they provide matter for a reinterpretation of the third part of the *Tolkāppiyam* in terms of modern scientific terminology. The *Tolkāppiyam* has four important commentators, all of whom lived between the 10th and the 16th centuries, but there are portions of the book which a modern commentator might be able to interpret in a manner more relevant and meaningful to the present age, and in the light of modern linguistics and theories of culture.

This view of *Tolkāppiyam*'s antiquity is supported by a whole weight of cumulative argument, and by minute study of the corpus of all early texts, and insoluable problems arise when on account of some discrepancy or other the compilation of the major part of the book is dated later than the *Caṅkam* anthologies. Interpolations in the *Tolkāppiyam*

as well as in the *Caṅkam* anthologies exist, but most of them occur in such places and contain such matter as is so obviously contradictory to the entire tenor of the literary corpus and the ethos it represents, that the contradictions become very apparent to the discerning student. It would be incredible that a work which was compiled so early and not printed until the end of the 19th century would be free of copyist errors and interpolations during epochs when new sets of Brahmanic social values and literary criteria progressively gained prestige and ascendancy among the Tamil literati. Most of the *Tolkāppiyam* is very intelligible when considered as pre-*Caṅkam*, but most of it hardly makes sense when considered as post-*Caṅkam*.

A final point has to be dealt with, and that is the relationship of the *Tolkāppiyam* to then existent grammars in Sanskrit. In the text of the *Tolkāppiyam*, apart from certain Sanskrit technical terms there are also provisions for the adaptation in Tamil of Sanskrit sounds and words. That the Sanskrit language and literature were not unknown in the Tamil country in the third century B.C. is certain. The Foreword or *Pāyiram* allegedly written by a student of Tolkāppiyar, one Paṉampāraṉār states that Tolkāppiyar was well versed in the Aindra school of Grammar. This school of Sanskrit grammarians is said to have existed prior to Pāṇini (4th C. B.C.) and to have the God Indra as its source. However, the Aindra school of grammarians are said to have enunciated their *cūttirams* in a simple and more diffuse manner than the Pāṇini school of grammarians. One set of scholars who are chiefly Sanskrit-biased see in the *Tolkāppiyam* an adaptation of Sanskrit phonology and syntax to Tamil grammar, while another set of scholars who are predominantly traditionalists in Tamilology, see no such influences or attempts in the *Tolkāppiyam* but only a restatement of the canons of Tamil grammar as known to the Tamil grammarians of Tolkāppiyar's age with the changes which he considered necessary for his time. The dependence of Tolkāppiyar on the Sanskrit grammarians is not proved, and therefore the statement that Tolkāppiyar has worked out a beautiful Tamil grammar on Sanskrit models without doing the least violence to the genius of the Tamil language is as little proved as the gratuitous and false assumption that Sanskrit was the magic wand whose touch alone raised Tamil from the patois stage to that of a literary idiom.[6] Both the language and literature in Tamil show an origin and development independent of Sanskrit models, but at the same time reveal knowledge and scholarship of Sanskrit and Prakrit on the part of Tamil grammarians and literati.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The texts are cited according to the numbering in the Kaḻakam Pocket Edition.

[2] A lucid exposition of these terms and of the seven-fold or five-fold division in *Tolkāppiyam* is to be found in A. K. RAMANUJAN, *The Interior Landscape* : *Love poems from a Classical Tamil Anthology*. Indiana University Press, 1967, pp. 97-115.

[3] Editors of the ancient *Puṟam* classics generally enter colophons regarding authorship and the *tiṇai* and *tuṟai* to which the poem belongs. In the case of *Akam* poems they specify the *tiṇai* and the situation which the poem portrays.

[4] E.g. 'guide poetry'. See L.P.K. RAMANATHAN CHETTIYAR. *Pattuppāṭṭil Aṟṟuppaṭai* in *Proceedings of the First International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies*, 1966. Vol. II, p. 449 ff. Apart from the well known histories of Tamil literature which discuss the *Tolkāppiyam*, the book of M. RASAMANICKANAR, *Tamiḻ Moḻi Ilakkiya Varalāṟu, Caṅka Kālam*, Paari Nilayam, Madras, 1963, is very much to be recommended.

[5] ALFRED A. KNOPF, New York, 1957, pp. 495-498. See extracts in *Tamil Culture and Civilization. Readings. The Classical Period*, pp. 3-8. Asia Publishing House. Bombay 1970.

[6] See K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI. *A History of South India*. 2nd ed., O.U.P., Madras 1958, p. 330.

The Critical Approach of the Commentators

K. MEENAKSHISUNDARAM

It is a well known truism that a plant is known by its roots. If the invisible foundation beneath the surface is not firm there can be no multi-storeyed structures. The sky-scraper depends upon the firmness of foundation beneath it. But neither the root nor the foundation is visible to the naked eye. They are unobtrusively present within the earth and function in their own way.

The scholars who read various books think a great deal. Their thoughts expand in various levels and in various directions. They attempt an interpretation of the writer. They naturally provoke deep thinking about the same concepts which they enjoyed themselves. Such concepts help in understanding the author's personality. Such an interpretation is quite obvious to us. But in interpreting these concepts the ancient Tamil literary critics have not specified what the basic principles are, on the strength of which they have constructed their literary theories. In short, the critics in Tamil have not explained in detail the basic principles of literary criticism. Nor is it possible to conclude that absence of specific mention of the theories is indicative of ignorance or absence of specific principles. An architect will be able to assess the strength of a building by looking at the height to which the construction rises above the surface of the earth. The well-informed persons may be able to infer the depth of the roots and the stability of a tree by taking a look at the stem, its strength and its height. Similarly those who observe the general depth of the commentary and its critical acumen will arrive at the conclusion that the critics had formulated in their minds the basic tenets of literary criticism before writing the commentary.

It is natural for literary critics to reassess the basic principles of the earlier critics just as an architect is capable of assessing the worth of a construction through the depth of its foundation.

To conclude that in a language of such hoary past and literary heritage there can be no principle of criticism will tantamount to the conclusion that since the foundation of a multi-storeyed structure is not visible, there can be no foundation at all. Let us, therefore, analyse the basic principles of the literary critics of our literature. If we read the commentaries carefully, the general trends of the basic qualities of criticism in their minds will be quite obvious. Tolkāppiyar stated the qualities of the creative writer specifically in one of his compositions :

வினையின் நீங்கிய விளங்கிய அறிவின்
முனைவன் கண்டது முதல் நூலாகும். (1)

The creative writer is one who is free from likes and dislikes, and he maintains his poise of equanimity without subjecting himself to the good or bad deeds, and above all these qualities he has the ability to absorb every truth as it is. He is capable of creating a work of art which is exclusively original and entirely new in theme and form. He has closely and carefully observed minute details of all aspects of life. Such are the admirable qualities of a creative writer.

There are born leaders who lead by virtue of their latent leadership qualities. There are others who follow such leaders and associate themselves with other people's leadership qualities. A truly great creative writer is one who, like the inborn leader, is capable of being a good writer by his own right. Such a writer does not create his works under the influence of other people's writings. He has a genuine desire and ability to portray original ideas in an entirely novel manner. Therefore our ancient people called him the pioneering leader among the literary group of writers.

Therefore, we may say that the commentators begin their critical work with the conviction that there will be no defect at all in the writings of the original. It is a matter of deep faith that there can be no serious blemish in the creative work of an author. Those who made an absolutely thorough study of *Tolkāppiyam* and the *caṅkam* literature were convinced of the fact that these works were totally free from all blemish. The concept that *caṅkam* literature forms the nucleus of the rules and regulations set down by *Tolkāppiyam* is strongly embedded in their minds. So the commentators never wished to find fault with the creative writers. Not only that. They set about the task of convincing those who found flaws that such flaws were not the author's blemishes, by any stretch of imagination. It was obvious that they considered that *Tolkāppiyam* was a grammatical treatise not merely for describing the poetical works written earlier than the age of *Tolkāppiyam* but that it indicates the rules followed by post-*caṅkam* poets of even the last *caṅkam* era. To convince through research and illustrations was the principal aim of the commentators. If no rule could be found in *Tolkāppiyam* justifying the literary trends of the last *caṅkam* era, they tried their utmost to justify it by bringing it somehow or other into a *Cūttiram* or an 'etc'—provision available in the course of a description of a rule. This general trend is to be traced in the writings of many commentators. The trend of writing a commentary for some of the *Cūttiram* will justify the general nature of the attitude displayed by the commentators.

At times, on finding no *Cūttiram* which has a suitable expression of their particular interpretation of the *Cūttirams* of *Tol*, they did not rush to the conclusion that it is the defect of the author. For example,

Iḷampūraṇar, one of the leading commentators of *Tolkāppiyam*, has this to state concerning the part of a heroine in the *Akattiṇai iyal* :

> ' The *Cūttirams* describing the part of the heroine might have been omitted owing to an oversight of the scribes.'[2]

Even the poet Cōmacuntara Pāratiyār, who is keen to find a new interpretation for his favourite ideas, states in his appreciation of *Akattiṇai iyal* (*Cūttiram* 1) that : ' the present beginning of *Akattiṇai iyal* indicates the possibility of a few *Cūttirams* which must have preceded the present arrangement. They too must have been written by the same author.'

It is possible that they have been spoilt by sea erosion and other corresponding changes.[3] He conveniently treats those *Cūttirams* which do not conform to his views as nothing but interpolations. *(இடைச் செருகல்கள்)* He makes it distinctly clear that some of these interpolations among the *Cūttirams in marapiyal (மரபியல்)* are indicative of caste distinctions, which he promises to substantiate later.[4] His commentary does not wish to fall out of step with the tradition that the author of the work is totally free from all blemishes.

If there are at any time two *Cūttirams* consisting of the same idea, then they were not treated casually as erroneous repetitions. But they treated them as a *Cūttiram* which originated in order to offer an explanation and dispel a doubt. It was treated as an explanatory *Cūttiram*. This is a noble tradition which may be worth observing. Many illustrations may be cited and here is one such :

In the *Akkattiṇai*

முதலெனப் படுவது நிலம்பொழுதிரண்டின்
இயல்பென மொழிப இயல்புணர்ந்தோரே ....(5)

முதலெனப்படுவது ஆயிரு வகைத்தே ....(6)

These two *Cūttirams*, at the surface level, seem to be one and the same. But the commentator (Iḷampūraṇar) says :

' This is to dispell any possibility of doubt.'[7] Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar calls it ' a trick of the explanatory provision '[8] Cōmacuntara Pāratiyār considers it ' a practice of confirmation.'[9] Therefore don't we see that the commentators make the creative artist an infallible genius of an artist by their artisty ?

Such an unquestioningly critical faculty happens to highlight a good trend. In fault finding one can see that there is a basic symptom of one who does not strain every nerve to understand the creative work with the help of his creative acumen. Such a tendency will always make a reader

glibly find a flaw even when, in truth, it may be lack of understanding and ignorance on the part of the reader. There will be no incentive whatsoever to go deep and search for the truth and beauty. If the author is treated as beyond a blemish then there is the possibility of greater desire to explore why a particular author expresses his ideas in a particular manner, which may seem at the outset an error. Otherwise there will always be ignorance condoning itself under the pretext of the author's fault. The basic approach that the author is infallible, is therefore, a noble attempt to strive and search and find out the supreme quality of artistic excellence in a creative writer.

However, it did not mean that the commentators were totally free from their critical attitude. On the other hand, they were hyper-critical of other commentators and went all out in search of minor faults. They learnt to see texts first. And learnt it thoroughly. Had a good view of the mental attitude of the commentary of all the writers. Applied them to the touchstone method of critical evaluation. Ultimately came out, undauntedly, with what they felt was the truth. Where compliments were due they showered encomiums very willingly. But where they had reasons for differences of opinion they daringly put forth their arguments in a forthright but a polite manner.

Wherever a different critic's opinions were not acceptable, the refutations of the commentators were well justified, polite and firm. Let us look at an illustration each from literature and grammar.

First of all from the literary writings of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. Tiruvaḷḷuvar expresses the subtle difference between life and body in one of his couplets :

*'' குடம்பை தனித்தொழியப் புள்பறந் தற்றே
உடம்போ டுயிரிடை நட்பு.''* *(10)*

(Birds fly away, and leave the nest deserted bare
Such is the short-lived friendship soul and body share

—G. U. Pope)[11]

The relationship between the body and life is described through a simile in this kuṟaḷ. The difference between the two critics Parimēlaḻakar[12] and Maṇakkuṭavar[13] arises in the interpretation of the meaning of the word *Kuṭampai (குடம்பை)* by both these critics.

The interpretation of the simile given by Parimēlaḻakar is this : just as the shell of an egg and life within it are created at the same time so too the construction of life and body takes place simultaneously. The interpretation of the simile given by Parimēlaḻakar gives the meaning of *Kuṭampai* as 'a shell' of an egg. Whereas the earlier commentator

Maṇakkuṭavar, who wrote earlier than Parimēlaḻakar, interpreted *Kuṭampai* as a nest. (கூடு)

There are two reasons for Parimēlaḻakar for turning down this explanation. First of all, it is not true that the nest appears at the same time as the young one. Secondly, even if the little one that emerges from the nest leaves the nest it may be able to come back to it. But this does not happen in the case of the shell of an egg and the young one. So this nest analogy is improbable in the case of life and body. Life and body appear simultaneously just as the shell of an egg and the little one are united together. In the case of life, once it leaves the body it does not come back to it in the same manner as the little one that has emerged out of a shell does not get back to it.

Such a deft and subtle comparison makes the readers think deeply and ponder over the deep notions imbedded within such cryptic poetry.

Let us look at an illustration from the Grammarians.

" னஃகான் ஒற்றே ஆடூஉ வறிசொல் " (14)

cūttiram from *collatikāram* of *Tolkāppiyam*. Here there is an emphatic e-marker in *Oṟṟē (ஒற்றே)* Ceṉāvaraiyar considers this as a euphonic usage. But his predecessors commented upon it as a separation marker. Ceṉāvaraiyar did not agree with this interpretation and commented : 'If the commentator has described it as a separation marker and the intention of the commentator is to expatiate upon the composition of *āṭu aṟicol (ஆடூஉ அறிசொல்)* then it is nothing but hypocrisy.' This illustration points out the tradition of treating an unacceptable interpretation as a hypocritical usage.

Wherever there were agreements between the two views they did not hesitate to state both views with due acknowledgements. There are occasions when there is a perfect agreement of ideas between two commentators. On such occasions both ideas were unhesitatingly presented.

An example may be cited from Tirukkuraḷ.

" பொய்யாமை பொய்யாமை ஆற்றின் அறம்பிற
செய்யாமை செய்யாமை நன்று." (15)

(If all your life be utter truth, the truth alone,
'tis well, though other virtuous acts be left undone

—G. U. Pope)[16]

Here a syntactic interpretation becomes inevitable and absolutely necessary to understand the construction :

Parimēlaḻakar thinks that 'The word *poyyāmai* (பொய்யாமை) which occurs twice in the first instance is intended for continuity and the latter *ceyyāmai* (செய்யாமை) is repeated for the purpose of emphasis.' If one can avoid falsehood or uttering a lie continuously without a break then he need not perform other noble or good acts. But Maṇakkuṭavar, who wrote earlier felt convinced that the best way of doing good deeds was to avoid falsehood and yet keep performing good deeds.[17] His words, however, were merely to this effect that if one performs good deeds simultaneously telling lies then no benefit will accrue to him. Since this interpretation is equally an unrefutable one, Parimēḻalakar leaves it just as it is, by merely mentioning it just in passing. If the commentators could explain why the differences existed they did so most willingly and readily.

If it is possible to offer an explanation and accommodate two apparently contradictory points of view, the commentators made a genuine effort at a compromise. Here is an illustration : while writing a commentary to *Collatikāram* Ceṉāvaraiyar explains the significance of the word *Col.*[18] The commentator who preceded him had observed that '*col* occurs by coalescing with a letter or an alphabet'. But Ceṉāvaraiyar was not satisfied with its meaning. At the same time he was not convinced that it was a mistake. Therefore he chose to offer an additional and an explanatory note : 'The fact that the commentator explains the formation of a word in terms of an alphabet is merely a partial elucidation of the actual situation.' This interpretation may be worth considering in greater detail. Therefore we may safely conclude that the critics of Tamil literary tradition accepted the interpretations and where it was not possible to agree with them contradicted them in details. But it must be said in all fairness that wherever possible the commentators exercised their discretion in agreement and disagreement.

It is worth observing here that instead of mentioning the earlier commentator by name, generally, the critic merely opposes the concept and not the author of the concept. That indicates a tradition of the earlier critics of Tamil literature : not to mention another commentator by name, but to contradict merely an idea or a concept of another critic. This refined approach in refuting unacceptable interpretations of earlier critics was a hallmark of our ancient literary tradition. This was a general trend found in the commentators in general.

If we are to treat the commentators also infallible, then we may be forced to accept every statement made by them. To a reader there shall be no challenge to study, to think deeply and to search for literary quali-

ties. For better appreciation of literature and seeking newer trends the attitude of implicit faith in the commentators may prove to be a very serious hurdle. So, in spite of the fact that the creative writers were considered beyond reproach by the authors of commentaries, the commentators were most careful in expressing their opinions concerning their views on literature. That explains why they approached other commentators with a high sense of critical values.

They praised the creative writers; but discriminatingly reviewed the commentators. Individuality of approach was most certainly encouraged. They had dual outlook on life: one of them was to praise and the other to discriminate. This basic duality constitutes the nucleus of grammatical and literary evaluation in Tamil. The critics were the tools in the process of literary appreciation and they provided food for thought to the readers. This duality of approach indicates the nature of basic foundation of literary appreciation among the Tamils.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Tolkāppiyar, Tolkāppiyam, Iḷampūraṇam, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram 640, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1, Edition 1956.

[2] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Iḷampūraṇam, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram 45 commentary, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[3] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Poruṭpaṭalam, Cōmacuntara Pāratiār, Akattiṇai iyal, Page 9, The C.M.V. Press, Madura, Edition 1942.

[4] Tolkāppiar, Poruṭpaṭalam, Cōmacuntara Pāratiār, Akattiṇai iyal, Page 67, 68, The C.M.V. Press, Madura.

[5] Tolkāppiar, Iḷampūranam, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram 4, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[6] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Iḷampūranam, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram 19, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[7] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, *Iḷampūraṇam, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram* 19 commentary, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[8] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Naccinārkkiṇiyar, Poruḷatikāram, Cūttiram 17, commentary, C. Ganesh Aiyar, Dhanalakshmi Book Society, Cunnagam, Ceylon, Edition 1948.

[9] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Poruṭpaṭalam, Cōmacuntara Pāratiār, Akattiṇai iyal, Page 57, The C.M.V. Press, Madura.

[10] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukkuṛal, Parimēlaḷakar, Kuṛaḷ 338, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1, 9th Edition 1953.

[11] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukkuṛaḷ, Translation, G. U. Pope, Kuṛaḷ, 338, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1, Edition 1958.

[12] & [13] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukuṛaḷ, Parimēlaḷakar, Kuṛaḷ 338 commentary, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[14] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Collatikāram, Cēṉāvaraiyar, Cūttiram 5, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1, Edition 1923.

[15] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukkuṛaḷ, Parimēlaḷakar, Kuṛaḷ 297, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[16] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukkuraḷ, Translation, G. U. Pope, Kuṛaḷ 297, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[17] Tiruvaḷḷuvar, Tirukkuṛaḷ, Parimēlaḷakar, Kuṛaḷ 297 commentary, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras-1.

[18] Tolkāppiar, Tolkāppiyam, Collatikāram, Cēṉāvaraiyar, Cūttiram 1 commentary, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Publishing Society, Madras-1.

The Plant Names in Kuriñcippāṭṭu

P. L. SAMY

A number of plants mentioned in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu* of Kapilar reads like a glossary of plant names. It looks as though ninety-nine plants have been mentioned if we go by the commentary of Naccinārkkiniar. While a few plants cannot be identified with any certainty, most of the plants can be identified accurately with a good knowledge of systematic Botany and Ecology of plants and also with the valuable experience of personal observation of the plants in their natural habitat. In arriving at the identifications of the plant names the commentaries by Naccinārkkiniar and the glossaries of *Tivākaram*, *Piṅkalantai* and *Cūṭāmaṇi Nikaṇṭu* are used with discrimination. The popular usage of plant names prevalent in different parts of Tamilnad and in Malabar is also relied upon for identification.

The plant list starts with lines 61 in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu.*

The first plant mentioned is *Ceṅkāntaḷ* which is identified as the well known *Gloriosa superba.* It takes the first place as it should be as there are very few plants in Tamil Nadu which can boast of such an intriguing and colourful flower as the flower of the Glory lily. The flower of the Glory lily is described in the passage as possessing shining petals. It has been held in Tamil literature that there are two varieties of Glory lily one with the red flowers[1] and another with white flowers.[2] But in nature there is no white variety. However, there are other species available like *Gloriosa rothschildiana*, *Gloriosa carsoni* and *Gloriosa richmondensis* which have pale yellow and salmon red large flowers. Perhaps the white variety called *Veṇkāntaḷ* or *Kōṭal* in Tamil literature may refer to one of the species possessing yellow flowers.

Āmpal is the water lily belonging to Nymphaea species and can be specifically identified as Nymphaea lotus which bears large, double-whorled, white flowers.

Aniccam is the plant mentioned next. It is impossible to identify the plant with any certainty as except for the solitary reference in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu*, there is no reference to it in the *Caṅkan* anthologies. *Tirukkuraḷ* alone in early Tamil literature contains references to this plant.[3] The petals of the flower are supposed to be so delicate as to fade out even when it is just smelt.

It is doubtful whether there are any flowers in nature having the characteristics mentioned in *Tirukkuraḷ.* The *Materia Medica* (1st part)

in Tamil published by the Government of Madras has taken *Aṉiccam* as *Nākamallikai* which is identified as *Rhinancanthus communis*. The name *Nākamallikai* is found in other Dravidian languages also. The flowers of *Rhinancanthus communis* are white while the leaves are long. It is a shrubby plant reaching five feet in height. It is also cultivated though mostly found in forest glades. It is not known whether it has the characteristics mentioned in *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. *Aṉiccam* may even be an imaginary flower.

Kuvaḷai is another water plant called *Ceṅkaḻunīr* and it is said to be flowering in the cool waters of deep ponds. In Sanskrit the flower *Kuvaḷai* is called *Kub alaya*. *Kub alaya* is derived from *Kuvaḷai*. *Kub alaya* in Sanskrit is identified as *Nymphaea stellata* which has predominantly blue flowers but it has a reddish-purple variety also. The word '*Ceṅkaḻunīr*' signifies a deep red flower and hence *Kuvaḷai* should be identified as *Nymphaea rubra* which has deep red flowers. *Perumpāṇāṟruppaṭai* (line 293) specifically compares the petals of the flower to the colour of the red lac. The flower was considered to be rather precious during the Pallava times as the Pallavas had levied a tax called *Kuvaḷaikkāṇam* for cultivating this plant in ponds. The flowers of *Nymphaea Rubra* are large, double and deep red in colour. It is also considered by some scholars as native to Bengal. This flower was probably used for worship in temples during the early centuries in Tamil Nadu.

Kuṟiñci is the famous plant called *Strobilanthes* which flowers gregariously over the mountain slopes periodically over an interval of four to twelve years depending on the species. The periodical flowering of the plant is the most important characteristic of the plant. Whole ranges of mountains used to look hazy blue when the blue variety, *Strobilanthes kunthianus* used to flower in unison gregariously over large tracts of mountain slopes. In *Caṅkam* poems the blue-flowered *Strobilanthes kunthianus* is mentioned as *Kuṟiñci*.[4]

Veṭci is *Ixora coccinea* and the crimson-coloured flowers of the plant were used for religious worship of minor deities.

Ceṅkoṭuvēri is the well known Ayurvedic medicinal plant, *Plumbago rosea*. The white variety is called *Plumbago zeylanica*. It is also called rose coloured leadwort in Pharmacopia and as *Cittramūlam* in Ayurvedic medicine. The red-flowered variety is called *Ceṅkoṭuvēri* but this plant is not mentioned in any other *Caṅkam* poem and it is mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and *Cilappatikāram*. It is considered as a native of Coramandel and bears bright red flowers. It is cultivated and planted as a garden plant. The name of the plant refers to the red flowers as well as the blistering nature of its root sap on human body.

Tēmā is a variety of Mango tree with sweet fruits. It must be a cultivated variety of *Mangifera indica.*

Maṇiccikai is *Ipomea sepiara* and the name is still in usage in Ceylon to denote this plant. The commentator has given the meaning as *Cemmaṇippū.* It grows in plains and in small hills and is found in banks of streams and rivers. The flowers are light pink to purple in colour. The flower has the shape of a bell.

The next plant mentioned is *Untūḻ* and it is explained as meaning the bigger variety of bamboo grass but the name *Untūḻ* does not occur in *Caṅkam* poems denoting this variety of big bamboo. The name *Untūḻ* seems to be misnomer for *Muntūḻ* which occurs in *Caṅkam* poems and *Nikaṇṭus.*

The name in the latter form occurs in *Akanāṉūṟu* (78), in *Kuṟuntokai* (239) and in *Malaipaṭukaṭām* (line 133). The lines bearing the names of the plants *Tēmā, Maṇiccikai* and *Untūḻ* are found only in one manuscript as indicated by Mr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer in his footnote.* If *Untūḻ* is taken as a name of the plant, it is difficult to explain why it occurs in this mis-spelt form. Even in *Nikaṇṭus*, the name occurs as *Muntūḻ* only. The wrong name given to this variety of bamboo indicates that the lines found in only one manuscript may be an interpolation. The large bamboo variety is *Bambusa arundinacea* and is called *Iruvetir* or *Muntūḻ* in *Caṅkam* literature. The name *Muntūḻ* may mean a plant which flowered long ago, and it is true that this variety of bamboo flowers approximately once in thirty years.

Kūviḷam is the tree *Aegle maramelos*, the leaves of which are used for the worship of Civa and is now called *Vilvam.* It is called by the name *Kūviḷam* still in Malayalam and Kannada languages. The plant mentioned as *Eṟuḻam* is said to be having flowers like the flame or a fire. It is not possible to identify this plant as no information is found about the plant in any other *Caṅkam* poem. It may be *Rhododendron arboreum* which bears crimson flowers and occurs commonly in South Indian hills.

Cuḷḷi is a plant mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and the commentator has given the meaning as *Marāmaram.* The meanings given by the commentator and the authors of *Nikaṇṭus* have caused a lot of confusion about the identification of *Marāmaram.* The commentator does not seem to have given the correct meaning. *Cuḷḷi* as a name of the plant does not occur in any other poem in *Caṅkam* literature, although

* Mr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer gives the following footnote to the Commentary: " 'தேமா' என்பது முதல், 'பெருமூங்கிற்பூ' என்பதிறுதியாகவுள்ளவைகள் தருமபுர வாதீன மடத்திலிருந்து கிடைத்த ஒரு பழைய ஏட்டுப்புத்தகத்தில் மட்டும் இருந்தன." (*Pattuppāṭṭu*, Naccinārkkiniyar Uṟai, 1950, Kalyānasundara Iyer. (p. 489).—Editor.

the *Nikaṇṭus* take the name as meaning more than one plant. The river *Periyāṟu* is called *cuḷḷiyam periyāṟu.*[5] *Cuḷḷi* has been translated as *Chūrna* by Sanskritists and the river is named *Chūrna. Cuḷḷi* seems to be a plant growing on the sides of this river *Periyāṟu* and this river was probably named *Cuḷḷi* due to the prevalence of these plants on its river banks and to distinguish it from other big rivers. According to common usage in Malayalam, Kannada and Tamil, *Cuḷḷi* has to be taken as a shrub growing in marshy tracts called *Barleria prionitis* which has got beautiful red flowers. It is also called *Cemmuḷḷi.*

The next plant name *Kūviram* should not be confused with *Kūviḷam* and *Kūviram* is to be identified as *Crataeva religiosa.* Probably the name closely resembles *Kūviḷam* (*Aegle marmelos*) because the leaves of both the plants are almost similar and are apt to be confused.

Vaṭavaṉam is another plant which is mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and there are no references to it in any other poems in Tamil literature. The *ocimum* species and the holy basil are called *Vaṉam* in *Nikaṇṭus* and probably *Vaṭavaṉam* may mean a variety of *ocimum.* It may be identified probably as *Ocimum gratissimus* which is known in Sanskrit as *Vanathuḷasi* and is considered as a forest variety in Malayalam also. The holy basil is called by the name *Tuḻāi* later in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and also in *Patiṟṟuppattu* and *Paripāṭal.*[6]

Vākai is well known as *Shirish* in Sanskrit and is identified easily as *Albizzia lebbeck.*

The white-flowered *Kuṭacam* is the *Kudaja* of Sanskrit literature and is called as white *pālai* in Tamil. *Kuṭacam* is not mentioned in *Caṅkam* poems but is referred to in *Cilappatikāram.*[7] It is identified as *Hollarhena antidysentrica.*

The meaning of *Eruvai* had been differently given by the commentators as a variety of sedge grass or reedlike plant. It is called *Pañcāykōrai* and also as *Koṟukkacci.* According to different commentators it is a plant belonging either to the Cypress family (*Kōrai*) or to the tall rushes like Bulrush.[8] The correct identification seems to be a Bulrush called *Typha angustata* which is called *Jambai* or *Cempai* in common Tamil with reference to the red colour of the inflorescence.

Ceruviḷai is said to be the white variety of *Kākkaṇam* which is identified as *Clitoria ternata* while *Karuviḷai* is the most popular variety of garden creeper which has bright blue flowers.

Payiṉi is a tree called *Vateria indica* and this tree yields a well known gum or resin called *piney* varnish or white Dammer which are trade names for the resin. The flowers of *Vateria indica* are very fragrant.

Vāṉi is another plant name mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and it is not possible to identify the plant with certainty as no description of either the leaf or flower is given. Mr. T. F. Bourdillon has mentioned in his book, *The forest trees of Travancore* a tree called in Tamil *Vāṉi* which bears the botanical name of *Euonymus dichotmus* (Wall). It is a small tree with drooping leaves and has the habit of weeping willow. It was found in Anamalai and other hills.

Kuravam is identified as *Webera corymbosa* and its several bunches of flowers are mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu.* It is a large evergreen shrub with shining leaves and with flowers funnel-shaped and grouped in *Corymbose Cymes.* The flower has far-exerted stigmas and hence, the flower in its bud is compared to the cobra's fangs in *Caṅkam* poems.[9]

Pacumpiṭi is also mentioned as one of the plants in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu.* The commentator has taken it as the flower of *Paccilai* which does not seem to be correct. As per the commentary given by Parimēlaḻakar in *Paripāṭal* it is only the tender leaf which is the most important part of the plant rather than the flower.[10] The leaf of the plant has got a pleasant smell and as such it has to be identified as *Garcinia zanthochymus* which is still called *Paccilai* in popular usage.

Vakuḷam is the Sanskrit name of *Mimusops elengi.* It is now called *Makiḻam* in Tamil. The botanical name bears the popular Malayalam name *Erañji* which is the same as *Ilañci* mentioned in *Cilappadikāram* and correctly identified by the commentator.

Kāyā is the *Kācā* plant of the common man and is identified as *Memycylon edule.* It has got beautiful blue flowers. *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* says that it has many inflorescences.

Āvirai is a common plant found growing in waste lands all over Tamilnad and the name is still in usage. It is identified as *Cassia auriculata.*

Vēral has been commented as meaning a small variety of bamboo. This variety of bamboo is found as common undergrowth in Sholas in Nilgiris. A *Naṟṟiṇai* poem (232) talks of this plant near the sholas forming live fences for small mountain villages. It has to be identified as *Arundinaria wightiana.*

Cūral is said to be '*Cūrai*' and as the name is still in usage in rural areas and also in Malayalam and Kannada languages it can be identified as *Zizhyphus oenofolia.*

Kuṟippūḷai is considered to be the small variety of *Pūḷai.* Taking the meaning given by the commentators into consideration it has been

identified as *Aerua lanata.* It is still called in Malayalam as *Cherupūḷai* by common people distinguishing it from the big tree *Pūḷai* which is *Bombax malabarica.* *Cirupūḷai* is only a small shrub and the name of the plant seems to signify the white cotton-like flowers of the shrub.

Kurunaruṅkaṇṇi is the next plant mentioned in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu* and according to the meaning given by the commentator it has to be taken as *Kuṇṭumaṇi* or *Abrus precatoris.* It is a common climber. The seeds of the plant are bright scarlet in colour with a black spot at one end and are used as weights for weighing gold. However, the word *Kurunaruṅkaṇṇi* may not mean a plant at all, and it may be merely an adjective to the plant name *Marutam* that follows that word.

The next plant mentioned after *Kurunaruṅkaṇṇi* is *Kurukilai.* The name in the text should merely mean a narrow leaf without signifying any plant. The commentators have wrongly split '*Kurunaruṅkaṇṇi Kurukilai Marutam*'[11] as three separate flowers. The whole line '*Kurunaruṅkaṇṇi Kurukilai Marutam*' may refer to just a single plant and may mean the plant 'Marutam' with its narrow tapering leaf and garland-like flowers grouped in its short inflorescence.

Marutam is no other than the Queen flower called in botany by the grandiose name *Lagerstroemia flos-regina.* The tree bears in summer season beautiful mauve flowers grouped together in short inflorescences. When the whole tree is in flower it is a glorious sight. The qualifying adjectives about the beautiful flower and the pretty leaf of this tree might have been wrongly taken as names of plants by the commentator. The leaves of *Marutam* were once used in the place of betel leaves by the Jains according to the information given by Campantar in the *Tēvāram* verses.

Kōṅkam is one of the best known trees having pretty and opulent yellow flowers and it is identified as *Cochlospermum gossypium.* *Marutam* and *Kōṅkam* mentioned in Tamil literature can be considered as the two trees found in Tamilnad having the prettiest flowers.

Pōṅkam and *Tilakam* are given the same meaning *Mañcāṭi* by the commentator. Perhaps the commentator takes the first plant as a shrub and the second plant as a tree which seems to be wrong. He explains the second name *Tilakam* only as meaning the tree, *Mañcāṭi.* If both the names signify *Mañcāṭi,* then the two names may indicate similar varieties. *Tilakam* is a tree popularly known as *Āṉaikuṇṭumaṇi* and is identified as *Adenantherá pavonina.* It has got brilliant scarlet seeds and the seeds are also used for weighing gold by local goldsmiths. It has yellow fragrant flowers. It is a very handsome tree and the seeds are called commercially as Barricari seeds.

The seeds weigh constantly 4 grains. The leaves of the tree are strikingly beautiful. The wood is known in trade as *Condori* or coral

wood. *Tilakam* is mentioned in *Vālmīki Rāmāyana* but the name is interpreted to mean *Sesamum*. It is surmised by some others in Sanskrit literature to be *Wendlandia exerta* without sufficient evidence. The *Tilakām* of *Rāmāyana* may be only *Adenanthera pavonina* of Tamil literature. This name occurs in *Maṇimēkalai* and *Nikaṇṭus* meaning *Mañcāṭi*.[12] The name *Tilakam* arose from the fact that a paste known as *Tilak* is made from the wood and hence, *Tilakam* can only be *Adenanthera pavonina*. If *Pōṅkam* is also *Mañcāṭi* we have to take it as *Malaimañcāṭi* as per popular usage and it can be identified as *Osmosia travancorica*. It is a lofty evergreen tree seen growing in the Western ghats and it has pods which are bright red and also has red seeds. As both the trees bear similar bright red seeds they were called in popular usage by the same name of *Mañcāṭi*.

The *Pātiri* flower smelling like honey mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* is the well known *Patala* of Sanskrit literature and is identified as *Stereospermum chelonoides*. The plant is discussed in detail in a recently published book on plant studies in *Caṅkam* literature.[13] The name of the tree *Patala* in Sanskrit seems to be a derivation from Tamil.

Cerunti is described as a kind of sedge grass by some commentators but all the *Nikaṇṭus* mention it as a tree called *Ceṅkōṭu* and *Pañcuram*. It is a tree and is to be identified as *Ochna squarrosa* which has pretty, orange or yellow flowers with bright petals. Most of the species of *Ochna squarrosa* are South Indian plants and are also cultivated in gardens for the pretty flowers. Many poems in *Caṅkam* literature mention about the beautiful yellow flowers of the plant.[14] It seems that in certain contexts the name has to be taken to mean the sedge grass, *Cypress bulbosus* which has pretty yellow-coloured inflorescences.

Atiral is commented as meaning a kind of wild jasmine called *Mōcimallikai* or *Kāṭṭumallikai* by some and as *Punalippū* by others. *Punalippū* seems to be the correct meaning for the plant. The description of the flower in *Caṅkam* poems leads to its identification as *Derris scandens*. It has numerous flowers and the flowers are found in long and numerous branches. The buds of the plants are described as resembling the beak of the Cuckoo bird or the sharp teeth of the jungle cat.[15] The flower has also a claw-like petal. *Akanāṉūṟu* describes an elephant pulling the plant with its flowers for its food.[16] The elephant is fond of this plant. It is still called *Āṉaikellikkoṭi* in popular usage. This shows the skill of keen observation exhibited by the *Caṅkam* poets and also by the common people in rural areas. In *Caṅkam* poems it is said to flower early morning and the numerous flowers in bunches are said to look like flower garlands. It is also said to flower in the late summer and actually it flowers in by July-August.[17]

Caṇpakam in Tamil or *Champa* in Sanskrit is identified as *Michelia champaca*. The plant is described in the poems as cool and large. The

plant is cultivated in gardens for the sake of its sweet smelling flowers. It is a native of the Western ghats.

Karantai has to be identified as *Sphaeranthes amaranthoides.* An *Akam* poem describes the colour of the flower as red.[18] A *Puṟam* poem compares the shape of the flower to the teats of the heifer calf and as the head clusters as cone-like. The comparison is very apt.[19] The plant is described as growing in cultivated fields in *Puṟam, Akam* and *Patiṟṟup-pattu* poems.[20] This shrub grows naturally in the Deccan and Carnatic regions in rice fields and near the sea coast. The commentator of *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* has described it as *Smelling Karantai* which is very apt. It is an aromatic shrub smelling like mint. In later times it was called *Civa Karantai.*

Kuḷavi is a plant frequently mentioned in *Caṅkam* literature and is given two meanings by the commentators. Some like Nacciṉārkkiṉiar take it as a kind of forest jasmine while others take it as a plant with evergreen leaves called *malaippaccai* growing in the hills. The latter meaning given to the plant seems to be correct if we examine carefully the descriptions of the plant given in the *Caṅkam* poems. The plant is described mostly in hilly situations. It is clearly said to grow in hill streams in *Akam* and *Kuṟuntokai* poems[21] and the thickly growing leaves of the plant are specifically mentioned in *Puṟam* and *Patiṟṟuppattu.*[22] The leaves of the plant were plucked and mixed with flowers in making garlands according to the information found in *Kuṟuntokai.*[23] *Naṟṟiṇai* talks of a small variety of evergreen *Kuḷavi* in the Kolli hills and also mentions about the tresses of the love-lorn lady smelling with the essence taken from the leaves of this plant.[24] The commentator has correctly given the meaning as *Malaippaccai* in this poem and *Tivākaram* also gives the same meaning. The essential oil taken from the leaves of the plant *Pogostemon vestitum* is called *Paccouli* in commerce and the name is derived from the Tamil word *Paccilai. Pogostemon* species grow in the Western ghats and other hills in the West coast regions at 6000 to 8000 ft. and occur in nature near mountain torrents. The leaves of the plant are often aromatic. *Kuḷavi* mentioned in *Caṅkam* literature is to be identified as *Pogostemon vestitum.* It is called *Malaippaccai* later signifying the evergreen nature of the plant. It seems that in *Caṅkam* literature three varieties of aromatic leafy plants are mentioned. One is *Garcinia zan-thocymus* which is discussed earlier. Another is called *Tamālam* in *Tivākaram* and only one reference to this plant is found in *Caṅkam* poems.[25] The bright and green leaves of the *Cinnamomum, Tamālam* is clearly described in the *Naṟṟiṇai* poem. *Tamālam* is a plant introduced from North India to the Western ghats and is now known as *Tamāla Pātiri.* The leaves of the aromatic plants were used for mixing them with flowers in making garlands as is the practice even today. *Puṟanāṉūṟu* makes mention of such a garland.[26] The leaf is called *Pularā paccilai.*

The leaf of the tree *Dalbergia sissoo* is even now called *Paṭarāppaccilai* implying that *paccilai* is normally considered as a creeper.

The wild variety of mango is mentioned as *Kaḷimā*. The wild mango tree is found in the evergreen forests of India. The fruit is full of turpentine and may be poisonous.

Tillai is the seaside mangrove tree called *Exoccaria agallocha*. The tree grows into a bushy tree often with many vertical branches and becomes bare without leaves in the hot season. The plant is described in *Naṟṟiṇai* as resembling the matted, falling locks of hair of a religious recluse probably with reference to its vertical branches.[27]

Pālai is identified as *Wrightia tinctoria* and is considered in *Caṅkam* literature as the typical plant of Zerophytic and dry tracts of land. The peculiar fruit of this plant is clearly described as resembling the two limbs of the fire tong and this apt comparison helps in identifying the plant with certainty. The tree itself was called *Nilapālai* and also as *Pālainilam* in later times. This tree is apt to be confused with *Kuṭacam* or *Hollarhena antidysentrica* mentioned earlier in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and both are called *Veppālai* in Tamil. This confusion exists in North India also about the two plants. The North Indian name in several languages are based on the milky juice of the tree as it is the case with the Tamil name also. The name *Pālai* for the tree arose from the milky sap of the plant and the latter usage of the word for the dry and scrub lands arose from the abundance of the trees in such tracts of land. The milky sap is one of the characteristics of the Zerophytic and dry land plants. Tamilnad never had true deserts and hence *Pālai* can never be a desert land. It only signifies the scrub and parched tracts of lands in summer season.

Mullai is *Jasminum auriculatum*, a climbing shrub growing wild in the plain and deciduous forests and was also cultivated. The plain forests and grass plains formed a tract called by the name *Mullai*. In *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* the plant *Mullai* is said to creep over the rocks which is true in nature.

Kullai is *Cannabis sativa* as it is given the meaning of *Kañcaṅkullai* by the commentator and also by the *Nikaṇṭus*. It is a tall annual shrub growing common in waste places and is also cultivated. The plant yields a resin which is a narcotic alkaloid called in commerce as *Kañcā*. It is doubtful whether its narcotic use was known in the *Caṅkam* period. No mention is made of this property through the fragrant nature of the flowers.

Piṭavam according to *Caṅkam* poems is considered to emit a strong fragrance which could be smelt from far off.[28] It is identified as *Randia*

maldbarica and the name *Piṭa* is still in use in certain parts of Tamilnad in the corrupted form as *Puṭan*. The species of *Randia* have sweet smelling flowers which are often large and pure white at first and turn yellow afterwards. The thorny nature of the plant, the whitish tender leaves and its flowering habit during the August-September rainy season are also mentioned in the *Caṅkam* poems.[29] The identification of this plant is made easy by these descriptions.

Siṟumārōṭam is interpreted in the *Nikaṇṭus* as *Ceṅkaruṅkāli* which is *Acacia sundra*. It is a small-sized tree with a very hard and dark-red heart-wood and the wood contains a tannin which is extracted from it by boiling. The heart-wood is highly valued for making pestles etc. The extract is known commercially as *Cutch* which is used as an ingredient for betel chewing. *Acacia catechu* is another species of the same family resembling *Acacia sundra* and is called *Karuṅkāli* in Tamil and it is also used for extracting *Cutch*.

Vāḻai has to be taken as the uncultivated wild banana variety, *Musa superba* which is seen growing in wild conditions in the Western ghats.

Vaḷḷi is a creeper belonging to the *Dioscoreae* family which have both wild and cultivated varieties. The cultivated varieties have edible bulbous roots.

Neytal mentioned next is a variety of water lily and is identified generally as *Nymphaea stellata*. The plant is described in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* as long and sweet smelling and it may be a bigger variety of *Nymphaea stellata*. There are varieties large, medium and small in *Nymphaea Stellata* possessing pale blue flowers. In *Caṅkam* anthologies two varieties possessing large and small flowers are mentioned.

Tāḻai in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* is interpreted as the Spathe of the cocoanut palm by the commentator but the name occurs in the *Caṅkam* poems meaning the *Pandanus* plant only.[30] Since the *Pandanus* plant is mentioned as *Kaitai* later in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* (line 83), Naccinārkkiṉiyar seems to be right in taking the meaning of *Tāḻai* here as cocoanut tree. The *Silappadikāram* also uses the same name in this sense and explains it as *Stilt-rootless Pandanus* comparing it with the *Pandanus* plant. While *Pandanus* has stilt-roots the cocoanut tree which bears the same name *Tāḻai* is without stilt-roots. The above comparison coupled with the names of the cocoanut tree *Teṅku, Teṉṉai* meaning the Southern direction suggest that the cocoanut palm might have been an introduction by sea in Tamilnad in early times from the South and it might have been introduced some time earlier than the first century A.D. or *Caṅkam* period. The references to cocoanut palm in *Caṅkam* poems are very few and the most significant fact is that nowhere the toddy extracted from the tree is

mentioned while the toddy of the palmyra palm is frequently mentioned and extolled. There are no references to the cocoanut plant in *Akanāṉūṟu, Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, Naṟṟiṇai* which are considered as earlier works. There are more references to cocoanut tree in the *Silappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai.* The cocoanut palm is considered by botanists as introduced into India from the Pacific islands of South and Central America. It is an anomaly to derive the name of Kerala from the Sanskrit name *Nārikēla* as the cocoanut palm itself seems to have been an introduction into the *Cēra* country. During the *Caṅkam* period the Kerala shore would not have had today's landscape with its innumerable cocoanut palms which we see now. If it were so, the *Caṅkam* poems describing Northern Kerala areas like *Ēḻumalai* etc. would have contained frequent references to the cocoanut palm. They do not have even stray references to the cocoanut palm and this absence is significant.

Taḷavam is always interpreted as the red coloured *Mullai.* It is a variety of *Jasminum* species though it is difficult to identify the variety exactly. It is a wildly growing variety. The variety *Jasminum rubescens* has large white flowers with pink undersides and it is known as *Kund* in Bengali and there is also another unidentified variety called *Sultani Jooee* with flowers having purple buds which are very popular in Calcutta. *Taḷavam* may be one of the varieties called *Kund* in North India and they occur in wild conditions in Tamil Nadu also.

Tāmarai is the well known lotus or *Nelumbium nucifera.* The spiny nature of the stem is frequently mentioned in the *Caṅkam* poems.

Ñāḻāl is a plant mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and other *Caṅkam* poems extensively. It is said to be a tree with pretty greenish-yellow flowers. The flowers are said to be as tiny as the eggs of the fish and the white mustard seeds.[31] The tender leaves of the plant are said to be shiny and beautiful. It may be identified as *Heritiera littoralis* or paplio which grows in littoral tracts of the sea-shore and has small flowers and is called *Nākam* in popular usage. The flowers are half inch long, greenish pink and the leaves are glabrous above and silvery beneath. The description of the flower and the leaf in *Caṅkam* poems accords well with the flower and leaf of *Heritiera littoralis.* One of the later commentators has called it *Cavantal* which seems to be correct. It is even now called *Countalai* in Tamil and is called *Sundri* in English. It might have been abundant on the sea-shore during *Caṅkam* times as it is now in the Sunderbans of West Bengal and might have been destroyed in South Indian shores.

'*Mauval*' is a plant mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and in many other *Caṅkam* poems[32] and it is generally considered as a home grown variety of Jasmine. It can be identified as *Jasminum officinale,* the common

Jasmine. It is frequently mentioned in *Caṅkam* poems with *Nocci* plant grown in households.[33]

The next plant *Kokuṭi* has the distinction of being mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* though it is mentioned in *Tēvāram* as a variety of *Mullai.* It is said to be fragrant and cool. It is difficult to identify the *Jasminum* variety specifically but it may be *Jasminum bignoniacseum* which is called as *Kāṭṭumullai* in Malayalam.

Cēṭal is interpreted as Coral-legged *mallikai* in Tamil and *Pārijātha* in Sanskrit and hence, it is identified as *Nyctanthes arbotristis* which also belongs to the same family of Jasmine. Another variety of Jasmine is referred to as *Cemmal* immediately after *Cēṭal* and it is commented as meaning *Cāti* flower. *Cāti mallikai* is identified as *Jasminum grandiflorum* and is so-called because of the superiority of its flowers. It is one of the best species for extraction of perfume and is a native of sub-tropical Himalayas. It is an introduction in the South from North since early times. The name *Cemmal* only means a superior variety and is called *Royal* in modern commerce and also as *Chameli* in North India. The name *Cāti* carries almost the same sense as *Cemmal.* In *Tivākaram* the word *Cāti* is given as another name for a small variety of *Caṇpakam* and just like *Chameli* in North Indian languages it is compared and confused with *Michelia champaca* because of its powerful smell. *Jāthi* in Sanskrit is identified as *Jasminum grandiflorum.*

Ceṅkurali is a name very difficult to identify as there is hardly any other reference to this plant in *Caṅkam* poems. It is said to be red in colour and is considered as a water plant. It may probably be identified as *Trapa bispinosa,* a water plant found in ponds.

Kōṭal is said to be a white variety of *gloriosa* species. As pointed out already there are many species in gloriosa differing in the size of its flowers and in the distribution of yellow and red colour of the petals. This plant has to be identified as one of the varieties with light yellow flowers.

Kaitai is *Pandanus odoratissimus* and it is to be noted that the name in this form occurs in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* alone in *Caṅkam* poems and *Ketaki* of Sanskrit literature is derived from this Dravidian name.

Vaḻai is interpreted as *Curapuṉṉai* by the commentators and *Nikaṇṭus* alike and *Curapuṉṉai* as it is popularly known even now is to be identified as *Ochracarpus longifolius.* It is an evergreen tree quite common in the forests of Western ghats and is often mistaken by foresters for *Garcinia* and it is significant that the Tamil name for *Garcinia* is *Vaḻaipuṉṉai* indicating the comparison made between *Ochrocarpus*

and *Garcinia* by the ordinary people. Both the trees belong to the family of *Guttiferae* to which the famous *puṉṉai* (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) also belongs. The association of *Ochracaprus* plants in numbers is mentioned in *Caṅkam* poems[34] and it is a fact known to foresters. *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* refers to the abundant pollen of the flowers. The flowers are used in Hindu ceremonies.

Kāñci is to be identified as *Trewia nudiflora.* It is found in moist forests along streams and reaches fine proportions in the forests of Tamil Nadu. In *Caṅkam* poem[35] the flowers are said to be drooping like garlands and look like the green pulse grains stringed together. The pollen is specifically mentioned as pale blue or green coloured and is said to be plentiful.[36] The tree is said to be found along the water streams. These descriptions in *Caṅkam* poems are true to nature. Male and female flowers are borne separately in the same tree and the male flowers are in long drooping racemes, 3 to 8 inches long. The flower is pale green and this colour is also mentioned in some *Caṅkam* poems.

Neytal is a name repeated again and is interpreted by the commentator as *Karuṅkuvaḷai.* It is only a variety of *Nymphaea stellata.*

Neytal as a plant was clearly mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* already in line 79 and it seems like a repetition unless the poet wants to mention specifically another variety of *Neytal. Nymphaea stellata* has pale blue flowers but there are also varieties with different shades of blue and even reddish-purple colours. Perhaps the comparison of the colour of the flower to blue precious stone in the poem is intended to convey the deep blue nature of its colour and such a variety is called *nīlam* in many *Caṅkam* poems as distinct from *Neytal.* Even among botanists there is confusion about the nomenclature of the *Nymphaea* species.

Pāṅkar is said to be a creeper as pointed out by Mr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer in his footnote. *Kalittokai* mentions it clearly as a creeper.[37] If we take *Pāṅkar* as the tree, *Ōmai* which is the meaning given by the commentator it has to be identified as *Hardwickia pinnata* on the basis of the information found about the tree in *Caṅkam* poems. Some of the *Caṅkam* poems refer to the habit of the elephant in peeling and eating the bark of this tree. The elephant is also said to thrust its tusks into the trunk of the tree for getting at the oily secretion in the trunk of the tree. This information coupled with the description of the bark and its association in dry and Scrublands leads to its identification as *Hardwickia pinnata.*

Marām is generally interpreted as white *Kaṭampa* but the meaning given by the commentators and *Nikaṇṭus* differ and cause confusion. While the flower is described as bearing the shape of a round ball in

Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai, it is described in many *Caṅkam* poems as having white twisted petals in bud. Obviously the author of *Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai* has confused *Kaṭampa* tree which has round globular flowers with *Marām* tree and this confusion led to *Nikaṇṭu* authors mixing both the names of the trees. The dry situations where *Marām* is said to occur and the descriptions of its flowers and other incidental information found in *Nikaṇṭus* lead to the identification of the plant as *Shorea talura* or *Shorea thunbergia* which grows in highly dry situations in South India. The *Nikaṇṭu* authors have taken *Marām* as meaning *Cālai* tree which is interpreted as *Shorea robusta* by the Madras Lexicon but *Shorea robusta* does not occur in natural conditions in Tamil Nudu while the other two species of *Shorea* occur sparingly in dry tracts. The name *Marām* might have meant *Shorea robusta* in Dravidian languages and signified originally a tree par excellence as it was a very important tree in the economy of primitive tribal people in India. India had extensive Shorea forests.

Taṇakkam, a tree described as full of flowers has to be identified as *Gyrocarpus americanus.* The name *Taṇakkam* is still in popular usage in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada languages. The word *Taṇakku* means a tail-like appendage as given in *Cintāmaṇi* (2887). The fruits of the tree are crowned with long wing-like or tail-like persistent parianth lobes and it is only with reference to these tail-like appendages of the fruit that the word came to signify the tree. This tree reaches large size but its wood is soft and light.

Īṅkai is interpreted as *Indu* which does not seem to be correct. They are actually separate plants. The confusion arose later due to the fact both are thorny twiners found together in close association in forest floors. *Īṅkai* is *Acacia caesia* while *Indu* is *Pterolobium indicum.* Both are climbers and twiners with curved prickles which cause great hindrance to those who trasverse through dense forests. The description of the tender shiny leaves and the red lac-like coloured flowers make it easy to identify it as *Acacia caesia.*[38]

Ilavam is the well known *Bombax malabarica* which has bright red big flowers and the thick petals of the tree are compared to the human tongue in *Caṅkam* poems.[39] However, this tree should be distinguished from *Eriodendron speciosa,* an introduced plant which is also called by the same name in popular usage now.

Koṉṟai is the well known tree *Indian laburnam* or the *Golden Amaltas.* When it flowers after shedding its leaves it is a sight for gods to see with its dropping sprays of golden-yellow flowers. The golden shower of its flowers appear in the summer and the whole tree is clothed with long garlands of flowers hanging from the branches. The garland-like inflorescence of the tree is also mentioned in poems.

Aṭumpu is a name still in current use and it is identified as *Ipomea pascapra*. The bilobed leaf and the bell-like flowers are mentioned in many *Caṅkam* poems.[40]

Ātti is the symbolic flower of the Cholas and is *Bauhinia tomentosa* which has pale yellow flowers. The bilobed nature of the leaf is mentioned in an *Akam* poem. The fibres of the plant were used for tying up flower garlands. This plant is a large shrub of the Carnatic region and is planted near temples for its flowers.

Avarai is described as a long creeper and this should not be confused with the present plant bearing the same name which generally refers to the twining french beans as it is a recently introduced plant. *Avarai* in *Caṅkam* poems stood for *Dolichos lab-lab*, the field beans which is now called *Moccai*. The white colour of the flower and the season of its flowering and other descriptions of the plant in *Caṅkam* poems clearly show that it is *Dolichos lab-lab*.[41] It is one of the most ancient among the cultivated plants and India is considered as the place of its origin.

Pakaṉṟai is interpreted as *Civatai* which seems to be its Sanskrit name. Its beautiful flowers which are said to blossom like silver plates are described in some *Caṅkam* poems.[42] It is said to be a creeper growing in ponds and swampy areas. The commentator has shrewdly differentiated it from the tree bearing the same name by referring to the shape of the flowers. It is identified as *Operculinia turpetham.*

Palācam is the Sanskrit name of *Butea frondosa* which occurs unusually in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* alone among *Caṅkam* anthologies. *Murukku* is the name for this plant in all other *Caṅkam* poems. The beautiful red flowers of this tree are described in many *Caṅkam* works.[43] *Palācam*, as the name of the tree, occurs in later Tamil literature.

Piṇṭi is the Sanskrit name of the Asoka tree and this name was used mostly by the Buddhists. The tree is identified as *Saraca indica*. Its numerous flowers are referred to in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu*. Asoka tree is called *Ceylalai* in *Caṅkam* poems[44] and *Piṇṭi* as the name for the plant was rarely used in *Caṅkam* works.[45] *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* itself calls it earlier as *Ceyalai* in line 105 while describing its tender leaves as red in colour.

Vañci is *Salix tetrasperma*. It is still called by the name of *Nirvañci* in some parts of Tamil Nadu. It is the Indian willow with creeping and drooping branches. It is a small moderate-sized tree and is said to grow gregariously along the banks of rivers. The tree is described on river banks in *Caṅkam* poems[46] and the name of the Chera capital, *Vañci* arose from the abundance of the tree.

Pittikam is now called *Piccakam* in Malayalam. The red or pink lines on the flower bud have been described in many *Caṅkam* poems.[47] The plant is a bushy creeper and can be seen commonly in Malabar. It is to be identified as *Jasminum angustifolium* whose buds are sometimes purplish on the outside and which flower from August to November in the rainy season as mentioned in *Caṅkam* poems.[48]

Cintuvāram is interpreted as *Veṇṇocci* in *Nikaṇṭus* and by the commentators. It is a Sanskrit name and is identified as *Vitex negundo.* It has been mentioned by Kalidāsa.

Tumpai is the well known *Leucus aspera* which has milky-white flowers.

Tuḻāy is the sacred basil, *Ocimum sanctum* considered to be sacred for Vishnu who wears it as a garland.

Tōṉṟi is a name which often occurs in *Caṅkam* poems meaning *Gloriosa superba.* It is described as the red-coloured *Gloriosa.* The petals are compared to flame. It may be a variety of *Glorious superba* with flowers having predominant red colour. This is a third variety of *Gloriosa* mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu.*

Nanti is interpreted as *Nantiāvaṭṭam* by the commentator which is *Tabernemontana coronaria.* It is cultivated in gardens. It is a small, deciduous tree with white fragrant flowers. It is called *Sthagara* in Sanskrit.

Naṟavam is described as a creeper of the forest floor in *Caṅkam* poems. It is said to possess fragrant white or reddish flowers.[49] The bumble bees are said to be very fond of the nectar of the flowers. When the bumble bees emerge from the flower they are said to be coated with yellow pollen grains and they look like the black assay stone turned golden by the frequent rubbing of gold for verifying its purity.[50] Some of the *Caṅkam* poems refer to the fibre of the plant being used for tying up garlands. It is also said that this creeper is frequently seen climbing up the Sandal trees and even when it is cut it puts forth shoots which climb up again. Based on the information given in the *Caṅkam* poems this plant may be identified as *Chonemorpha macrophylla* which sometimes has large whitish or cream yellow flowers and they become red before falling. The flowers possess five villous marks on the inside of the five petals. They have lot of pollen and are very fragrant. The smaller roots of the plant have an aromatic odour resembling camphor. They are found in forest floors with large beautiful green leaves and they climb tall trees. The plant yields a good fibre. It is said in *Naṟṟiṇai*[51] that the Sandal tree haustorizes with this creeper, *Naṟai*, and the

commentator has specifically clarified here that the Sandal tree does not develop strong smelling heart-wood if the roots of the Sandalwood tree do not embrace and twine with the roots of other plants. It is well known that the Sandal is the only tree in India which is a root parasite and without sufficient undergrowth of plants around it, Sandal tree cannot form sufficient heart wood. It would be interesting if this information is checked up in natural conditions to find out whether the parasitic roots of the Sandal tree haustorizes with the roots of *Chonemorpha macrophylla*. There is another shrub which is found in forest floor called *Naragamia alata*. It is found in the Western ghats up to 3000 ft. as a forest undergrowth. It has white pretty flowers. It is called *Nilanaragam* in Malayalam. It has elongated, linear, spathulate flowers with anthers containing pollen grains at the mouth. The Malayalam name *Naragam* closely resembles the *Caṅkam Naṟavam* which is derived from the word *Naṟai* meaning the fragrance of the flower as *it* is the case of other names of plants like *Naraṅka* and *Narantam*. Hence, the plant may be even *Naregamia alata* belonging to the *Meliaceae*.

Puṉṉākam is interpreted by the commentator as a special variety of *Puṉṉai*. *Puṉṉai* is identified as *Colophyllum inophyllum*, a common seaside tree. *Puṉṉai* is mentioned later in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu*. Hence, *Puṉṉākam* has to be identified as a variety of *Colophyllam* and it is to be identified as *Colophyllum elatum* which grows in the forests of Western ghats but not near the seashore as it is the case with *Colophyllum inophyllum*. It is now called *Kāṭṭup Puṉṉai* in Tamil. It is called *Pōn* tree in trade. This species is an evergreen tree with handsome foliage and reaches great heights in the Western ghats. In Sanskrit *Punnāgam* is generally identified as *Colophyllum inophyllum* which does not seem to be correct. *Puṉṉākam* seems to be a combination of two Tamil names *Puṉṉai* and *Nākam* as both the trees bearing the names resemble closely in their leaves and flowers and belong to the same family of *guttiferaceae*.

Pāram is the common cotton plant, *Gossypium herbaceum*. In *Caṅkam* poems it is said to grow wild in dry and draught-affected tracts and it is considered by botanists also as a Zerophytic plant found growing naturally in dry situations.

Pīram is the common vegetable *Luffa acutangula*. The pale yellow colour of its flowers is often compared to the pallor on the face of the pining girl for her lover.

Kurukkatti is the beautiful evergreen creeper, *Hiptage madablata* which has very fragrant flowers. The creeper is called *Mādhavi* in Sanskrit and it is called *Kurukkilai* in *Caṅkam* poems probably due to the shape of the large tapering beautiful leaf of the plant which is also described in *Caṅkam* poems.

'*Āram*' is the famous Sandalwood tree *Santalum album* and it is called *cāntu*, *cāntam* in *Caṅkam* poems. The names arose probably from the use of the paste made from the scented wood for removing body odours.

Kāḻvai is interpreted as *Akil* which is a species of *Dysoxylum malabarium.*

Puṉṉai is *Colophyllum inophyllum* which is a common littoral tree frequently seen on our seashores. It is called the big *puṉṉai* to distinguish it from *Puṉṉākam.* The fragrance of the flowers is mentioned. The beautiful shining leaf, the white flowers and the yellow pollen grains are extensively described in *Caṅkam* poems.

Narantam is interpreted as the flower of *Nārattai* by the commentator which does not seem to be correct. Since the commentator has taken the view that all the plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* have beautiful flowers, he has to take *Narantam* as a tree with flowers and not as the fragrant grass which it is. The name *Narantam* occurs in *Caṅkam* poems meaning the fragrant grass.[52] Even during the *Caṅkam* times the fragrance of the oil extracted from the grass was well known.[53] The grass is the same as the Nardin of Gangetic valley mentioned by Hippocrates which is referred to in Dymock and Warden.

A poem in *Pattiṟṟuppattu* mentions about the association of the plant with the Himalayas and the river flowing from it which is probably the Ganges.[54] The oil was famous as an export article from India and it is mentioned by Dioskoroides, Periplus and Pliny. *Narantam* ought to be only grass and not the tree called *Nārattai* as the commentator would have it and probably he has taken this meaning from *Tivākaram.* *Nārattai* is identified as *Atlantia monophylla.*

Nākam is the same as *Nagakesara* of Sanskrit literature and is to be identified as *Mesua ferrea.* It is an evergreen tree often planted as an ornamental tree. In the forests of Tamil Nadu it forms associations which may cover considerable areas. This fact also had been mentioned in *Caṅkam* poems.[55] The large white fragrant flowers are very beautiful to look at. The pollen of the flower is particularly mentioned. The dried flowers are now used in Ayurvedic medicines.

Naḷḷiruṇāṟi is interpreted by the commentator as *Iruvāṭci* which is a variety of Jasmine called *Mayilai* according to *Piṅkalantai Nikaṇṭu.* The meaning given by the commentator is wrong and it is also not correct to take *Iruvāṭci* as a corruption of the name *Iruḷvāci* as he seems to have done. *Iruvāṭci* is only a corruption of the name *Iruvāycci* as the same is called *Peruvāy* in *Patiṟṟuppattu* (9 : 81 : 25). The name in *Kuṟiñcip-*

pāṭṭu literally means a flower which smells in the middle of the night. *Iruvāycci* means the double-mouthed Jasmine which is *Jasminum sambac.* It has a variety with double whorls or mouths as the name *Iruvāycci* implies.

Iruṅkuruntu is considered as *Atlantis spinosa* which grows wild and yields orange-like fruits sour in taste. It is different from the ordinary *Kuruntu* which is *Atlantis missionis.* They are almost similar. The description of the flower and the tree accords with this identification.

Vēṅkai is *Pteropcarpus marsupium.* The flowers are described extensively in many poems in *Caṅkam* literature.[56] The name still exists in common usage.

The last plant mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* is intriguing. *Puḻaku,* the commentator takes as the red-flowered variety of *Erukkam* which is *Calotropis gigantea.* While the greenish-white flowered variety is uncommon, the variety with lilac or purple flowers is common. Apart from the reference in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* there is only one reference to this plant name in early literature in *Malaipaṭukaṭām* which talks of thickly growing *Puḻaku* on the hill sides. *Puḻaku* is to be identified as the purple-flowered variety of *Calotropis gigantea.* The colour of the flower is compared to the colour of lac. The flower of this plant was considered to be beautiful. The commentator has given other meanings for this plant as *Cempū* and *Puṉamuruṅkai* which all seem to be of later usages.

A study of the plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* reveals that the poet has not followed the hoary convention of the five regions with their particular association of plants, animals and other animate and inanimate objects. In fact, the poet has deliberately departed from the convention as the whole list of plants in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* represents a collection of plants of the different regions arranged neither scientifically nor according to the accepted poetic convention. The occasional departures from the poetic convention seen in some of the *Caṅkam* poems have been explained by the commentators under the theory of *Tiṇaimayakkam* which justifies the mixing of the fauna and flora and other objects among the regions. But although the commentators have tried to justify the indiscriminate mixing of plants in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* on the basis of the theory of *Tiṇaimayakkam,* the explanation seems to be extremely far fetched as by no stretch of imagination the typical plants like mangrove plants occurring naturally near the seashore can be described in mountain forests and hilly regions.

A deep and detailed study of the *Caṅkam* anthologies reveal that the plants, animals and birds described and ascribed to the five landscapes

are ecologically true to nature with a few exceptions here and there. It is not understood by many that the typical trees, animals and even birds pertaining to the regions are surprisingly accurate and true to nature though to a lesser extent than at present. The theory of intercharge of plants, animals and other objects among five regions has only limited application in nature and this fact was recognised even in the time of Tolkāppiyaṛ. Aṭiyārkkunallār, the commentator of *Cilappatikāram*, has in fact limited its application to *Kuṛiñci* and *Mullai* regions which are considered to appear like *Pālai* region under severe summer and under extreme drought conditions and his view of the theory can be scientifically explained. But it cannot be applied and explained satisfactorily in respect of other regions. Some commentators have tried to explain the theory in respect of other regional landscapes also but failed. Even the few examples given by the commentators like Iḷampūraṇar which have been taken as true by some scholars are unconvincing was water lilies can be found not merely in agricultural region but also in mountain ponds and there need be no explanation for occurrence of water lily in *Kuṛiñci* region on the basis of regional interchange. Aṭiyārkkunaḷḷāṛ has correctly understood and explained the significance of the theory of *Tiṇaimayakkam* by pointing the role of climate and it is only the climatic factor which is responsible for the appearance of scrub land and zerophytic tracts in otherwise hilly or plain regions. He has carefully explained that the two regions take the appearance of *Pālai* under extreme climatic conditions. It was even held by grammarians that *Pālai* has no physical features except the climatic factor which is responsible for the change brought on *Kuṛiñci* and *Mullai* landscapes. While there can be interchange of animals and birds, there can hardly be any interchange of plants in nature. A study of the plants mentioned in the regions of *Kuṛiñci, Mullai* and *Pālai* in *Caṅkam* anthologies will be helpful in understanding this regional fusion in the correct perspective. *Kuṛiñci* is predominantly the mountain region with the monsoon and evergreen forests while *Mullai* is predominantly in the plains with deciduous forests and grassy plateaus. *Mullai* landscape does not exist much now as it was almost eliminated by human destruction and inhabitation. The vegetation in these landscapes take the appearance of dry forests and scrub jungles when the rainfall drops very much below the normal level and extreme drought conditions prevail. It is this phenomenon which has been explained by the theory of *Tiṇaimayakkam*. Take for example the Teak tree. It is described in *Caṅkam* literature both in *Kuṛiñci* and *Pālai* landscapes. Teak is found both in monsoon forests of western ghats and also in dry deciduous forests in association with *Anogeissus latifolia* (Namai) and *Terminalia belerica* (Kadu) which are described in *Pālai* in *Caṅkam* poems. It is the occurrence of such plants like teak in both *Kuṛiñci* and *Pālai* which is explained by *Tiṇaimayakkam*. A recent archaeological study of a chalcolithic site in West Khandesh in Bombay State has revealed almost the same floristic composition 3500 years ago

as found today and surprisingly a study of the plants mentioned in *Pālai* region in *Cāṅkam* anthologies reveal the same floristic composition typical of the dry deciduous forests with its most typical association of the tree, *Anogeissus latifolia.* If we carefully study the plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* we can easily find that the grouping of the plants is entirely artificial and unnatural, a feature not seen anywhere in *Caṅkam* poems. The theory of *Tiṇaimayakkam* can hardly explain the association of mangrove plants like *Tillai, Tāḻai, Aṭumpu* and even cocoanut tree with trees and shrubs typical of the mountain forests like *Vāḻai, ṅākam* and *puṉṉākam.*

Why did the poet of *Kuriñcippāṭṭu* depart from the accepted convention in the description of plants when we see no other poet has taken such liberties with the convention even in as late a period as the 16th century (A.D.)? The one plausible reason is found in the commentary itself.

It is said that *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* was sung by Kapilar to teach the Tamil language to his Aryan pupil, Birakattaṉ. *Kuṟiñcippaṭṭu* is actually a longer narration of the episode of the lover's first meeting in the forest and mountain regions and such episodes occur in many poems of the *Caṅkam* anthologies. While in these poems the plants belonging to the *Kuṟiñci* tracts are only mentioned and the convention is strictly adhered to, it is only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* we find the plants of all the five regions mentioned indiscriminately. This is like the artificial description of the lover's place of tryst in *Iṟayaṉār Akapporuḷ* which is a later grammatical work in which we find all kinds of beautiful plants grouped together and mentioned without adhering to the convention of the five regions. Such artificial grouping of plants may aim at describing an ideal landscape for the meeting of the ideal lovers. The other reason may be that the poet wanted to teach the Aryan pupil the names of the important plants occuring in Tamil Nadu and hence, we see the glossary of plant names in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu.* Most of the plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* occur in the other *Caṅkam* poems as well.

There are some other features found in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* which are not seen in other *Caṅkam* anthologies. The poet has preferred Sanskrit names for certain plants which do not occur in *Caṅkam* poems. *Piṇṭi* for *Ceyalai* of *Caṅkam* anthologies occur only in *Cilappatikāram, Maturaikkāñci, Maṇimēkalai* among the early works. *Cintuvāram* as a name of a plant occurs only here and the Sanskrit name has been used for the Tamil name *Nocci* which is frequently mentioned in the *Caṅkam* poems. *Cintuvāram* and *Nirkunti* are used as synonyms for *Veṇnocci* in *Nikaṇṭus. Palācam* is another Sanskrit name preferred by the poet for its Tamil name *Murukku* which occurs in many *Caṅkam* poems. This Sanskrit name is used in later Tamil works. *Puṉṉākam* as a name

of a plant does not occur in *Caṅkam* anthologies though it occurs in *Paripāṭal* which is considered by some scholars as later than *Akanāṉūṟu* and other anthologies. *Vakuḷam*, the Sanskrit name for *Makiḻam* occurs in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* only in the *Caṅkam* anthologies. *Ilañci* as the name for this tree, *Mimusops elengi* occurs in *Cilappatikāram*. Iḷaṅko Aṭikaḷ here seems to have preferred the Malayalam dialectical name to the Tamil name *Makiḻam* which occurs in *Paripāṭal* and which also seems to be a corruption of *Vakuḷam*. *Tuḻāi* does not occur in *Caṅkam* poems except in *Paripāṭal* and the name seems Sanskritic. *Ceṅkōṭuvēri, Maṇiccikai, Aṉiccam, Kūviram, Eruḻam, Vāṉi, Payiṉi, Vaṭavaṉam, Kurīppūḷai, Kokuṭi, Cēṭal, Cemmal, Ceṅkurali, Cuḷḷi, Taṇakkam, Nanti, Naḷḷiruṇāri* and *Pulaku* are plant names which occur for the first time in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* though in later works like *Cilappatikāram, Maṇimēkalai, Peruṅkatai* and even *Tēvāram* some of these names do occur. But *Vāṉi, Vaṭavāṉam, Eruḻam, Naḷḷiruḷnāri, Maṇiccikai, Cemmal, Cuḷḷi, Cēṭal* and *Pōṅkam* are mentioned only in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and nowhere else. This feature shows that there has been a conscious attempt on the part of the poet to list even unfamiliar plants so as to make a glossary on the plant names.

Although the commentator has assumed that all the plant names in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* refer to their flowers only there is no basis for such an assumption. Not all the plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* bear significant flowers. Such plants like the cocoanut, the mango, *Zizyphus oenophilia* the bamboo and many others lack colour or fragrance. Hence, it cannot be established that the poet succeeded in making the place of meeting for the lovers ideal in nature by grouping together all the plants having beautiful flowers. Even significant plants like *Cūral* (*Zizyphus oenophilia*) are mentioned. There are plants mentioned in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* which are known more for their fragrant leaves than for their fragrant flowers. Many of the plants do not belong to mountain regions, and some of the plants are definitely cultivated species. The cultivated Mango, Cocoanut and *ocimum* plants are a few examples. The few varieties of Jasmine seem to be cultivated varieties. *Vitex negundo* (*Cintuvāram*) is also a cultivated plant.

The artificiality in grouping of the plants is also evident from the way in which the poet has alternated the names of the plants so as to sound pleasing to the ears while reading the lines aloud. Take for example the lines 73 and 74 or the lines from 87 to 96. The plant names have been arranged to suit the poetic device of alliteration. It is also considered by some scholars that exactly 100 plants have been mentioned and if it is so, the round number for the plants found in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* shows that the poem aims more at listing the plants rather than at describing the plants as they occur in *Kuṟiñci* landscape. In many other poems of Kapilar found in *Akanāṉūṟu* and other earlier anthologies,

there are extremely realistic descriptions of nature abounding in accurate, exact and scientific descriptions of plants and animals in their natural habitat. The difference in treatment of nature by Kapilar in the other *Caṅkam* anthologies and in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* leads one to doubt whether the author of *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* and other *Kuṟiñci* poems in *Caṅkam* anthologies are one and the same. There is also a tradition of more than one Kapilar in *Caṅkam* anthologies.

Although it is difficult to explain the significance of the occurrence of a list of plants in a long narrative poem like *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* the fact remains that in very few literatures or poems is such a large number of plant names mentioned. Descriptions of nature in poetry occurs in literatures of most of the languages but it would be difficult to come across such accurate and scientific description of flora and fauna as found in *Caṅkam* literature. The significance of the list of plants in *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* lies in the fact that this list happens to be the *first attempt at a glossary of plant names in Tamil language and in many other languages.*

FOOTNOTES

1 *Naṟṟiṇai* 34, 294, 379 ; *Kalittokai* 52.
2 *Akam*—264.
3 *Tirukkuṟaḷ* 90, 1115, 1120.
4 *Naṟṟiṇai* 116, 268, 301 ; *Akam* 308 ; *Kuṟuntokai* 3 ; *Puṟam* 374 ; *Maturaikkañci* 301.
5 *Akam* 149.
6 *Patiṟṟuppattu* 31 ; *Paripāṭal* 58.
7 *Cilappatikāram* 14 : 87.
8 Old Commentary to *Kuruntokai* 170.
9 *Akam* 237.
10 *Paripāṭal* 19 : 75.
11 *Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu* 1 : 72-73.
12 *Maṇimēkalai* 3 : 161.
13 Samy, P. L., *Caṅka Ilakkiyattil Ceṭikoṭi Viḷakkam*, The Saiva Siddhantha Society, Madras.
14 *Puṟam* 369 ; *Akam* 280.
15 *Akam* 391.
16 *Akam* 157.
17 *Akam* 261, 393.
18 *Akam* 269.
19 *Puṟam* 261.
20 *Puṟam* 340 ; Akam 221 ; *Patiṟṟuppattu* 40 : 56.
21 *Akam* 82, 272 ; *Kuruntokai* 100.
22 *Puṟam* 90 ; *Patiṟṟuppattu* 70 : 3.
23 *Kuṟuntokai* 100.
24 *Naṟṟiṇai* 346.
25 *Naṟṟiṇai* 292.
26 *Puṟam* 33.
27 *Naṟṟiṇai* 195.
28 *Akam* 23 ; *Mullaippāṭṭu*—line 25.
29 *Akam* 34, 344 ; *Kali* 101.
30 *Patiṟṟuppattu* 52 : 23.
31 *Kuruntokai* 50, 397 ; *Akam* 20 ; *Kali* 131.
32 *Akam* 21, 117 ; *Kali* 14, 27.
33 *Akam* 21, 23, 117 ; *Naṟṟiṇai* 115, 122.
34 *Malaipaṭukaṭām*—line 181 ; *Akam* 328 ; *Kuṟuntokai* 260.
35 *Akam* 341.
36 *Kali* 26, 108.
37 *Kali* 111.

[38] *Akam* 243, 294 ; *Kuṟuntokai* 101, 110.
[39] *Akam* 142.
[40] *Akam* 80 ; *Kuṟuntokai* 243.
[41] *Akam* 243, 294.
[42] *Akam* 219 ; *Kali* 73.
[43] *Akam* 41, 223, 229, 277 ; *Kuṟuntokai* 156 ; *Naṟṟiṇai* 73.
[44] *Kuṟuntokai* 233 ; *Aiṅkuṟuṉūṟu* 273.
[45] *Maturaikkāñci* 700.
[46] *Puṟam* 387 ; *Aintiṇai eḻupatu* 43.
[47] *Akam* 42, 295, *Kuṟuntokai* 222.
[48] *Kuṟuntokai* 168, 222 ; *Akam* 42, 295.
[49] *Aiṅkuṟuṉūṟu* 276 ; *Naṟṟiṇai* 25 ; Kali 54, 84.
[50] *Naṟṟiṇai* 25.
[51] *Naṟṟiṇai* 5.
[52] *Puṟam* 132 ; *Paripāṭal* 7 : 11.
[53] *Puṟam* 235.
[54] *Patiṟṟuppattu* 11 : 22.
[55] *Cirupāṇāṟṟuppaṭai* 87-88, 108-9.
[56] *Akam* 188, 202, 227, 345 ; *Naṟṟiṇai* 318, 351, 383.

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8. Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu
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10. Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaṭai
11. Tirumurukāṟṟupaṭai
12. Mullaippāṭṭu
13. Maturaikkāñci
14. Malaipaṭukaṭām
15. Tiṇaimālai
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LIST OF PLANTS IN *KUṞIÑCIPPĀṬṬU*

	Tamil name	*Botanical name*	*English name*
1.	Ceṅkāntaḷ	Gloriosa superba (Linn.)	Glory lily
2.	Ámpal	Nymphaea lotus (HK. F & T)	Water lily
3.	Aṉiccam	Anagallis arvensis (Linn.) Pimpernal	Snake jasmine
4.	Kuvaḷai	Nymphaea stellata (Willd.)	Purple water lily
5.	Kuṟiñci	Strobilanthes kunthianus (Spp.)	—
6.	Veṭci	Ixora coccinea (Linn.)	Searlet Ixora
7.	Ceṅkōṭuvēri	Plumbago rosea (Linn.)	Rose flowered leadwort
8.	Tēmā	Mangifera indica (Linn.)	Mango — cultivated variety
9.	Maṉiccikai	Ipomea sepiaris (Koen.)	—
10.	Untūḷ? (Muntūḷ)	Bambusa arundinacaceae (Willd.)	Bamboo
11.	Kūviḷam	Aegle marmelos (Corr.)	Bael
12.	Eṟuḷam or Tēruḷam	Calycopetris floribunda (Roxb)	—
13.	Cuḷḷi	Barleria prionitis (Linn.)	—
14.	Kūviram	Crataeva religiosa (Forst)	Three leaved caper
15.	Vaṭavaṉam	Ocimum gratissimum (Linn.)	Shrubby basil
16.	Vākai	Albizzia lebbeck (Benth)	Siris
17.	Kuṭacam	Hollarrhena antidysenterica (Wall.)	Kurchi ; Conessi bark
18.	Eruvai	Typha aungustata (Bory & Chaub)	Bulrush
19.	Ceruviḷai	Clitoria ternata (Linn.) (white variety)	Mussel-shell creeper
20.	Karuviḷai	Clitoria ternata (Linn.) (blue variety)	Mussel-shell creeper
21.	Payiṉi	Vateria indica (Linn.)	Piney tree
22.	Vāṉi	Enonymum dichotmus (Heyne)	—
23.	Kuravam	Webera corymbosa (Willd.)	—
24.	Pacumpiṭi	Garcinia zanthochymus (Hook. f.)	—
25.	Vakuḷam	Mimusops elengi (Linn.)	—
26.	Kāyā	Memecylon edule (Roxb.)	Iron wood tree
27.	Āvirai	Cassia auriculata (Linn.)	Tanner's cassia
28.	Vēral	Arundinaria wightiana (Nees)	—
29.	Cūral	Zizhyphus oenofolia (Mill. gard)	—
30.	Kurippūḷai	Aerua lanata (Juss.)	—
31.	Kuṟunaṟuṅkaṇṇi ?	Abrus precatorius (Linn.)	Indian liquorice
32.	Kurukilai ?	Butea frondosa (Koen.) ?	The flame of the forest
33.	Marutam	Lagerstroemia flos-reginae (Retz.)	Queen's flower ; Pride of India
34.	Kōṅkam	Cochlospermum gossypium (DC)	The yellow silk cotton ; Lead bellows
35.	Pōṅkam	Ormosia travancorica (Bedd. Fl.)	—
36.	Tilakam	Adenanthera pavonina (Linn.)	—
37.	Pātiri	Stereospermum chelonoides (C.B. Clarke)	Yellow flowered fragrant trumpet
38.	Cerunti	Ochna squarrosa (Linn.)	—
39.	Atiral	Derris scandans (Benth.)	—
40.	Caṇpakam	Michelia champaca (Linn.)	—
41.	Karantai	Spaeranthes indicus (Linn.)	The globe thistle
42.	Kuḷavi	Pogostemon vestitum (Benth.)	Patchouli
43.	Kalimā	Mangifera indica (Linn.)	Wild mango
44.	Tillai	Excoecaria agallocha (Linn.)	The blinding tree
45.	Pālai	Wrightia tinctoria (R.Br.)	Deyer's oleander
46.	Mullai	Jasminum auriculatum	Jasmine
47.	Kullai	Cannabis sativa (Linn.)	Indian hemp
48.	Piṭavam	Randia malabarica (Linn.)	—
49.	Cirumārōṭam	Acacia sundra (DC)	Sundra
50.	Vāḷai	Musa superba (Roxb.)	Wild banana
51.	Vaḷḷi	Dioscorea species	—
52.	Neytal	Nymphaea stellata (Willd.)	Blue water lily
53.	Tāḷai	Cocos nucifera (Linn.)	Coconut tree
54.	Taḷavam	Jasminum rubescens (Vahl.)	—
55.	Ṭāmarai	Nelumbium speciosum (Willd.)	Sacred lotus
56.	Ñāḷal	Heritiera littoralis (Dryand)	—
57.	Mauval	Jasminum officinale	—
58.	Kokuṭi	Jasminum sambac (Ait)	Arabian jasmine
59.	Cētal	Nyctanthes arbor-tristis (Linn.)	—
60.	Cemmal	Jasminum grandiflorum (Linn.)	Spanish jasmine

	Tamil name	Botanical name	English name
61.	Ceṅkurali	Trapa bispinosa (Roxb.)?	Singara nut
62.	Kōṭal	Gloriosa superba (Linn.) (variety)	Glory lily
63.	Kaitai	Pandanus odoratissimum (Linn.)	Screw pine
64.	Vaḷai	Ochracarpas longifolius (Benth)	—
65.	Kāñci	Trewia nudiflora (Linn.)	River portia
66.	Neytal	Nymphaea stellata (Willd.) (variety)	Blue water lily
67.	Pāṅkar	A creeper or Harwickia pinnata? (Roxb.)	—
68.	Marām	Shorea talura (Roxb.)	—
69.	Taṅakkam	Gyrocarpus americanus (Jacq.)	—
70.	Īṅkai	Acacia caesia (Willd.)	—
71.	Ilavam	Bombax malabaricum (DC)	Silk cotton tree
72.	Koṉṟai	Cassia fistula (Linn.)	Indian laburnum
73.	Aṭumpu	Ipomoea pes-caprae (Sweet)	Goat's foot creeper
74.	Ātti	Bauhinia tomentosa (Linn.)	Yellow mountain ebony
75.	Avarai	Dolichos lab-lab (Linn.)	Garden bean
76.	Pakaṉṟai	Operculinia turpetham (Linn.)	—
77.	Palācam	Butea frondosa (Koen.)	Flame of the forest
78.	Piṇṭi	Saraca indica (Linn.)	The Asoka tree
79.	Vañci	Salix tetrasperma (Roxb.)	Indian willow
80.	Pittikam	Jasminum aungustifolium (Vahl.)	—
81.	Cintuvāram	Vitex negundo (Linn.)	The chaste tree
82.	Tumpai	Leucas aspera (Spr.)	—
83.	Tuḷāi	Ocimum sanctum (Linn.)	Sacred basil
84.	Tōṉri	Gloriosa superba (Linn.)	Glory lily
85.	Nanti	Tabernaemontana coronaria (Willd.)	—
86.	Naṟavam	Lavunga scandens (Ham.)	Kakkola
87.	Puṉṉākam	Calophyllum elatum (Bedd.)	The poon tree
88.	Pāram	Gossypium herbaceum (Linn.)	Cotton plant
89.	Pīram	Luffa acutangula (Roxb.)	The ribbed gourd
90.	Kurukkatti	Hiptage madablata (Gaertn.)	—
91.	Āram	Santalum alburn (Linn.)	The sandal tree
92.	Kāḻvai	Dysosylum malabaricum (Bedd. Fl.)	—
93.	Puṉṉai	Calyphyllum inophyllum (Linn.)	The Alexandran laurel
94.	Narantam	Cymbopogon flexuosus (Wats.) (Andropogon nardus var. flexuosus)	Cochin lemon grass
95.	Nākam	Mesua ferrea (Linn.)	The iron wood tree
96.	Nalliruṇāri	Jasminum sambac (Ait) var. Virupakshi	—
97.	Iruṅkuruntu	Atlantis monophylla (Corr.)	—
98.	Vēṅkai	Pterocarpus marsupium (Roxb.)	Kino tree
99.	Pulaku	Calotropis gigantea (Linn.) (lilac or purple variety)	—

ADDENDUM

1. *Aṉiccam*—It has been identified as *Anagallis arvensis* by R. Kumarasamy of the College of Indian medicine, Palayamkottai, which may be correct.

2. *Kuvaḷai*—The Sanskrit name is derived from Dravidian by Dr. Burrow.

3. Eruḷam—Since the plant name is given as Teruḷam in *Puram* (119) and *Kārnārpatu* (25) the name found in *Kuriñcipāṭṭu* may be wrong. This name is found in the two lines which may be interpolations. There is a creeper called *Tērulan* in popular speech and it is identified as *Calycopteris floribunda* (Roseb.). It is very common climber in forests. When the fruit matures the whole inflorescence becomes brick red and the colour renders the plant more visible. The plant having red flowers as described in *Kuriñcippāṭṭu* can be this. *Puranāṉooṟu* compares the flowers to the pink-red spots on the face of the elephant which is very apt. It is said to flower in the rainy season. It flowers mostly in December.

4. Vaṭavaṉam—It may mean vaṉam of the North India.

5. Naravam—It is identified as *Luvunga Scandens* (Ham) by Mr. R. Kumarasamy—It is a creeper of the forest floor. It has fragrant flowers and fruits. It is called *Kakkola* in Ayurvedic medicine.

Reviews

Preliminaries to Linguistic Phonetics, By DR. PETER LADEFOGED, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1971 (US $6.25).

Reviewed by V. SUBRAMANIAM

Since Pike (1943) there have been numerous books on the various theoretical aspects of Phonetics. But this book under review is the best attempt to-date to describe the preliminaries of Linguistic Phonetics in a very simple and familiar terminology without taking sides with theoreticians. The main data for this book are drawn from well over a hundred languages and are presented in the systematic phonetic level. In the words of the author ' The ultimate aim of this book is to assist in the development of a set of features which would be appropriate for phonological descriptions.' And the author has achieved his aim in an undoubtedly admirable manner by meticulously describing phonetic facts ' in terms of acoustic events and articulatory events' (p. 4). Through a carefully chosen maze of data, which are very well-marked for their relevance, the author is able to build up a delicate and yet firm thread of reasoning leading to the proposed set of systematic phonetic features which compare favourably with those of Chomsky and Halle (1968). The reader can't fail to miss the subtle reasoning that convinces him about the greater applicability and universality of the newly described features, whose relevance the whole book demonstrates in an effortless manner.

While the author is extremely modest about his well-informedness of a mass of data drawn from ' the phonetic structure of a number of African, Indian and European languages (and a few of the less well known ones) outside these areas' (p. 2) and his own command of RP (' my own debased RP ' : p. 64) there is very little doubt about the fact that Peter Ladefoged has collected a wide range of linguistically contrastive data which he has carefully and accurately recorded in a system of symbols based upon IPA (1949) but with suitable modifications which are adequately explained in the legends for the tables. (See especially nasalized vowels and semi-vowels in Yoruba, Table 33, or the many collaborative descriptions such as Korean on p. 24 and Uduk p. 27).

Besides linguistic sophistication in the presentation of data there are many new insights and suggestions to investigate theoretical problems raised by the author which shall puzzle phonetic pundits for a very long time to come. To cite a single instance : ' In some forms of British English (such as London English or my own debased RP), there is no alveolar contact and the tip of the tongue is behind the lower front teeth for the syllable final l and syllabic l ; but the back of the tongue is still

raised, and there is still a narrowing of the tongue such that, if there were central alveolar contact, the sound would be a lateral. The problem is how to classify this articulation. The raising of the back of the tongue cannot be called a secondary articulation when there is no other stricture ; and although the narrowing of the tongue is still present, the sound is not a lateral. For the moment we must leave this phonetic problem unresolved' (p. 64).

In pages 23-31 the author discusses the four principal air-stream processes and the need for setting up the features of nasality and pre-nasality. The importance of the feature of rounding is borne out in his illustrations of sounds in Table 43 (p. 66).

In pages 67-90, Ladefoged revels in his familiar field of acoustics and instrumental analysis of Vowels (Ladefoged 1964b, 1967) and *Working Papers in Phonetics* (June 1967). A significant remark of his concerning the Dravidian languages is indicative of his careful analysis :

> ' Some of the Dravidian languages such as Malayalam have three stops and three nasals in this region all of them being made with the tip of the tongue. The Dravidian languages seem to be the only ones in which contrast involving these nearby places of articulation on the roof of the mouth do not also involve a different part of the tongue ' (p. 38).

The table No. 22 provides a series of relevant examples involving contrasts based upon the six points of articulation in Malayalam, which is equally relevant to its genetically-related Tamil, indeed. However the use of the more centralised [ʌ] in the medial and final positions of

" kʌmmi ' shortage '	pʌn̪n̪i ' pig '	kʌnni ' Virgo '	kʌṇṇi ' innk in chain '	kʌɲɲi ' boiled rice and water	kʌŋŋi ' crushed '
	en̪n̪ʌ ' named '	enne ' me '	eṇṇʌ ' oil '	te:ɲɲʌ ' worn out '	te:ŋŋʌ " ' coconut ' (p. 40)

is likely to be a matter of controversy among the native speakers. The author has perhaps not taken into consideration the common feature of lip-rounding, which is associated with all centre to back vowels, especially in Malayalam.

The author draws a distinction between trills, taps and flaps in a subtle but clear manner (p. 50) and illustrates through examples drawn from Tamil and Spanish. While Tamil distinguishes between a tap and

trill at the phonemic level; there is a contrast between laterals and post-alveolar approximant :

l as in	/ kəl /,	/ kəḷ /,	/ kəḻi /.
	'stone'	'liquor'	'stick'

By choosing to contrast the postalveolar approximant [ɹ] with [ɾ] and [r], Ladefoged seems to indicate his preference to group the distinctly Tamil-Malayalam sound 'ழ' as an approximant, which theory has palatographic support. Arden quoting Firth's analysis (Arden: 1969; p. 49) considered the sound a 'slurred, obscure sound between *r* and *l*.'

Table 59 sums up Ladefoged's proposed feature system, which may become the basis of descriptions of languages which are not dealt with in detail so far. The precise and accurate comparisons found in Tables 60 to 66 focus the reader's attention on the major differences between the systems of Chomsky and Halle (1968) on the one hand and Ladefoged on the other. The multivalued system has an edge over the binary system in the description of Vowels where different degrees of tongue height are involved.

But for very minor slips on p. 65 (omission due to oversight) and p. 109 (in spelling), the compact book is flawlessly simple, readable and lucid. For sheer 'wealth of pertinent data' and 'lucid exposition of the principles and dilemmas of linguistic phonetics within the broader context of linguistic theory' Ladefoged's book will become a standard text book to all those who are interested in the preliminaries in a nutshell.

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An Announcement

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES—SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

It has been decided by the Board of Governors that the first Project of the Institute should be to start a School of Languages, at which intensive courses in Tamil would be offered at the elementary and advanced levels to non-Tamils who visit Tamil Nadu with a view to acquiring a basic or more advanced knowledge of Tamil language, literature and culture.

The most modern methods of teaching a second language to adults shall be employed and though an adequate emphasis shall be placed on the spoken skill of Tamil language, equal importance to the other skills (such as reading, writing) will be simultaneously given. A language laboratory and Programmed Audio-Visual techniques shall be employed to reinforce linguistic structures and patterns. The objective of the courses shall be to make the learners understand and make use of standard Tamil. Students at the levels of Undergraduates, Postgraduates and Research Scholars are welcome to apply for admission to these courses.

The Institute does not meet the expenses of the visiting students either for travel or their stay in India, and therefore, it is urged that scholarships and financial assistance may be obtained first before applying to the Institute for affiliation.

The courses will commence on the second Monday of July of each year for the Elementary course and on the third Monday of January for the Advanced course. The duration of the courses shall be three months each.

Applications may be routed at least 3 months in advance through Universities and Departments of South Asia Programmes or Area Studies to :

The Chief Administrative Officer,
International Institute of Tamil Studies,
Central Polytechnic Campus,
Adyar, Madras-600020.
INDIA.

Every effort will be made to accommodate the visiting students in families or hostels where they will be able to meet students and others.

Corporate life and realistic experiences in Tamil Nadu will be provided. Sufficient number of visits to places of cultural interest will be arranged during the courses.

During the period of training and language learning the students are welcome to assist the Institute in establishing its structure of various departments in various ways by offering help of technical nature such as assistance in the phonetic recordings, library maintenance and so on.

Our Visitors

The Visitors to the Institute during 1971-72 *are:*

1. Dr. Albert B. Franklin (and Mrs. Franklin) from Kansas University. Dr. Franklin made a critical study of the contemporary Tamil Fiction.

2. Dr. Asko Parpola (and Mrs. Parpola) from the Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen. He delivered a Lecture on Decipherment of the Indus Script.

3. Dr. (Mrs.) Albertine Gaur, Department of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts, The British Museum, London, W.C.1 gave an illustrated lecture on ' Oriental Manuscripts in the British Museum'. The meeting was held with the kind collaboration of the British Council in Madras.

4. Mr. Eamon D. Murphy, Department of History, Centre for Asian Studies, The University of Western Australia.

5. Dr. (Miss) Brenda E. F. Beck from the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of British Columbia at Vancouver, Canada, gave a talk on her field work in *Koṅku Nāṭu.* The talk was arranged with the kind collaboration of the Indian Academy of Psychology at the Presidency College, Madras.

6. Mr. Thomas L. Finkelstein, (and Mrs. Finkelstein), the Liaison Officer of UNESCO in New Delhi.

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